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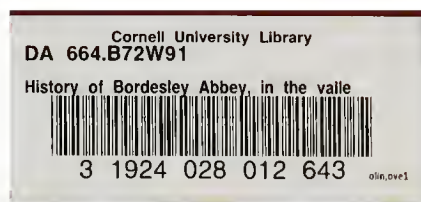


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WORCESTERSHIRE.





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THE HISTORY OF BORDESLEY ABBEY.



BORDESLEY ABBEY,

AS IT PROBABLY APPEARED IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

FROM A PAINTING BY J. M. WOODWARD, NOW IN THE POSSESSION OF R. S. BARTLETT ESQ.



THE HISTORY
OF
BORDESLEY ABBEY,
IN THE VALLEY OF THE ARROW,
NEAR REDDITCH, WORCESTERSHIRE.



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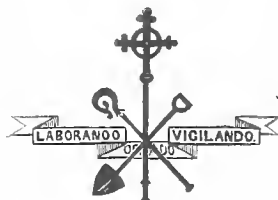
R. S. BARTLEET, J.P.

DEPUTY LIEUTENANT FOR THE COUNTY OF WORCESTER; LATE CAPTAIN COMMANDING THE 17TH WORCESTERSHIRE

RIFLE VOLUNTEERS,

BY

J. M. WOODWARD.



LONDON AND OXFORD: J. H. & J. PARKER.

BIRMINGHAM: CORNS AND BARTLEET.

1866.

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Birmingham : Printed by Corns and Bartleet, High Street and Union Street.

TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE BARONESS WINDSOR,
OF HEWELL GRANGE,

WHOSE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF EVERY MOVEMENT, INTENDED FOR THE BENEFIT OF HER NEIGHBOURS,
IS HIGHLY APPRECIATED BY ALL CLASSES,

This Work,
CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT OF AN INTERESTING PORTION OF HER WORCESTERSHIRE ESTATE,

IS DEDICATED,

WITH SINCERE RESPECT,

BY

R. S. BARTLEET.

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PREFACE.

T being usual to give some reason why a book has been written, and published, I comply with this custom. I had for many years, in fact since boyhood, taken an interest in the *Abbey Meadows*, as they are familiarly called by the inhabitants of my native town, and when, in early life, with my old schoolfellows, or friends, and more lately with my wife and children, I have rambled through them, after pointing out where stood, till shortly before my birth, the *Old Chapel*, which local tradition said was the only remnant of the once famous Abbey, and further informed us that the said Chapel had been the Refectory of the same, wishing to add to the interest of my companions, whilst gazing on the almost shadows of the past, I ventured on fabled histories of the departed Monks, and on surmises as to the slumbering ruins under the prominent grassy mounds.

My interest in the spot had been doubtless quickened by tales that were told me, when a boy, about discoveries said to have been made in former times, during the removal of stones from the buried ruins for the purpose of improving a neighbouring road. The most striking of these tales related to *a Lion covered with gold, which vanished as soon as it was uncovered*, and to *the underground road all the way to Beoley*. Such marvels naturally added to my feelings of curiosity, and increased my interest in so mysterious a spot. With years these

feelings of curiosity and interest ripened into a desire to learn all I could about the Abbey; and I was, for some time, satisfied with the description given by Nash in his *History of Worcestershire*. More recently the idea occurred to me to re-produce the Abbey upon canvass; but before such an attempt could be made, it was necessary to obtain the fullest possible information respecting it, and as this involved more leisure than I could control, and more archæological genius than I possessed, I proposed to Mr. WOODWARD, the Tutor to my Sons, to carry out the idea, promising him all the assistance in my power, by obtaining for him facilities to refer to all historical records, all known remains, and by introducing him to all such *old inhabitants* as were likely to render him any assistance in his researches.

Mr. WOODWARD hesitated for some time, after undertaking to carry out my wishes, to commence what appeared to be so difficult a task, seeing that it was no less than the re-creation of a building, of which no remnant *in situ* was visible above the level of the ground.

I was, however, anxious that it should be effected if possible, and, therefore, arranged for a commencement of the attempt. This was made on a fine day in June, 1863, when, accompanied by my Wife and eldest Children, the Vicar, and Mr. WOODWARD, and armed with a luncheon basket, and the Rifle Corps' measuring cord, I proceeded to the Abbey Meadows. There a pleasant afternoon was enjoyed in the fresh air and sunshine, time passing quickly whilst marking out and measuring the ground plan.

Thus commenced a work, the publication of which will, I believe, be the means of giving to my friends and neighbours, as they stroll through the Valley of the Arrow, correct views of the scenery as it existed when the Abbey of Bordesley stood, in its original grandeur, in that charming and then sequestered spot, *The Abbey Meadows*; and will, I think, enable them to realise the varied

scenes once witnessed, where now but grassy mounds remain : so that the speculations they may have hitherto indulged in, may give way to ideas conveyed by facts related in this history of the venerable pile that was, at one time, so great an ornament and advantage to the district in which they live. They may also be led, by a knowledge of these facts, to entertain more correct views of the then valuable Order who inhabited it, and better understand the benefits that have been derived by succeeding generations from their existence, during that period of our history, when the now restored parish of Redditch was founded by them.

In order to enhance the interest of the subject, I arranged with Mr. WOODWARD to take sketches of all known fragments of the fabric, and to compose from them and the ground plan a general view of the Abbey, as it appeared before its destruction ; and, although this picture must be, to a certain extent, imaginary. it is only so in detail, as the general plan and arrangement, as well as style of architecture, have been clearly traced. How cleverly Mr. WOODWARD has carried out my wishes, the frontispiece, and the various illustrations in this book, will prove to the reader.

In pursuing the subject, various points of difficulty occurred ; one was with regard to the date of the laying of the foundation stone, on which authorities are not agreed. To clear up this important point I applied to the Right Hon. The BARONESS WINDSOR, for permission to search for the foundation stone, which her Ladyship granted in a most courteous manner ; and on the 14th of March, 1864, I commenced the necessary excavations, of the result of which a full account will be found in this book.

On some other knotty points I consulted Sir THOMAS PHILLIPPS, of the Manor House, Broadway, a great authority on antiquarian subjects ; he kindly advised a reference to the Rolls Court, where numerous deeds, connected with property

belonging to the Abbey, are to be found, and have been duly consulted, as have also various records in the British Museum. Every effort has, therefore, been made to obtain the fullest information upon the subject, and I beg to thank those friends and neighbours who have allowed access to their fragments of the Abbey, or who have afforded information, for the assistance they have so kindly rendered. To Mr. WOODWARD I am much indebted, for the patient perseverance, true archæological zeal and artistic skill, which he has shown in carrying out my suggestions.

In conclusion, I will fain express a hope that the information, which is conveyed in the following pages, may add to the interest of this very beautiful neighbourhood; and that it may furnish subjects for agreeable thought and reflection to those whose lot may be cast, during the present and future generations, in the busy and thriving town, overlooking the site of the Abbey, in which it has been my pleasure to be settled from my birth. And may I here be allowed to add an expression of my earnest desire that its inhabitants may ever strive to emulate the good deeds of their forerunners, in the best days of Bordesley Abbey, when it was renowned for its deeply religious and talented Brotherhood, as well as for the industry with which they promoted the welfare of the neighbourhood, by their schools, their careful culture of the soil, and improvement of their flocks; thus raising the sequestered vale from entire obscurity, till it became the centre of life and light to the district.

ROBERT S. BARTLEET.

The Shrubbery, Redditch,
Christmas, 1865.

PROLOGUE.

N this book I have attempted to describe a Building, the greater part of which no man living has seen, and of which neither description nor drawing has been handed down to us. I have attempted to shew, both with pen and pencil, what the appearance of Bordesley Abbey was at the time that Abbot William and his White Monks took possession of it; also to shew in what troublous time it was founded, and by whom, and for whom, those buildings, which extended over eight acres of ground, were erected; to shew where the Monks had their Minster and Cloister, their Chapter-house, and Dormitory, their Guesten-hall, and Refectory; to shew where stood their Kitchen, and Cellarage, their Infirmary, and Novitiate, and the many minor buildings which would be attached to so large and important an Abbey; to shew, also, where they made their Orchard and Garden, their Fish-ponds, and Mill-pools; and where they built their Granges, and their Mills.

And, since this time was so long ago, long before Lord Windsor fought for King Charles, at Naseby, or Sir William Sheldon for King Richard, at Bosworth, and, therefore, some may ask: How can this man write a description, or draw the plan of a building which has been destroyed these two hundred years? or if he have made a correct plan, can he draw elevations therefrom? or say, of a surety: This room is a

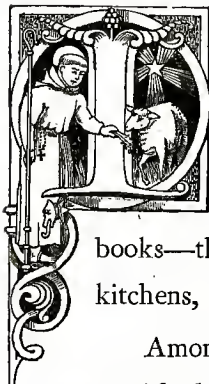
Kitchen, or that a Library? I purpose shewing, in the first chapter, the steps by which I arrived at my conclusions, and reproduced on paper an Abbey, of which but one solitary vestige has remained above ground within the memory of living man.

J. M. WOODWARD.



THE
HISTORY OF BORDESLEY ABBEY.

CHAPTER I.



IN all conventual establishments there were many buildings, each devoted to a particular use, to wit: the Minster for devotion—the Cloister for study and recreation—the Noviciate for probation—the Schools for the young—the Infirmary for the sick. The Chapter-house, where the Rules of the Order were read—the Library for the books—the Sacristy for the sacred vessels, and the Refectory for meals; besides kitchens, cellars, parlours, stables, barns, etc.

Among these there was one so singular in size and shape as to be easily distinguished, by its ground plan, from all other parts of the Convent. This was the Cloister, or large square, in the alleys of which the monks read, meditated, and took exercise at the appointed times, and round this, as a nucleus, all the other buildings were placed, according to a plan rarely deviated from in religious houses built by the same Order of Monks.

Therefore, the first step towards making out the Ground Plan of Bordesley Abbey was to find the site of this Cloister.

There was little difficulty in doing this: In the Abbey Meadow, amongst what at first appeared to be misshapen mounds of earth, I soon found a large square area measuring along each side about thirty-five yards. Within this area the ground was level, and showed no trace of any building having been erected within it. This was undoubtedly the Great Cloister of the Abbey

Now, according to the earliest Cistercian arrangement (the Monks of Bordesley were Cistercians), the order of buildings around the Great Cloister would run thus :—

ON THE NORTH SIDE OF THE CLOISTER.

The Nave of the Minster.

ON THE EAST SIDE.

The South Transept of the Minster.

The Little Library.	}	{	Over these two rooms was the Large Library.
The Sacristy.			
The Chapter House.	}	{	Over which was a Passage from the Dormitory to the S. Transept.
The Calefactory.			
A Parlour.	}	{	Over which was the Monks' Dormitory.
The Abbot's Lodge.			

ON THE SOUTH SIDE.

The Refectory.	}	{	These buildings were invariably on the side opposite to the Minster.
The Kitchen.			

ON THE WEST SIDE.

A detached Cellarage.

Upon carefully examining the mounds of earth in the Abbey Meadow, I found that they generally corresponded with this arrangement. To the north and east of the large square area before mentioned, were mounds of a larger size than the others, such mounds as would probably be made by the fall of a larger building like the Minster; while near the probable junction of the nave, transepts, and chancel, a large mound seemed to mark the fall of the tower. These circumstances seemed to prove that the rule of Cistercian arrangement was not violated at Bordesley, and that the Minster stood in its accustomed place on the north of the Cloister; the reason for building it on the north side is obvious,

for if it were built on any other side it would shade the Cloister, during a considerable part of the day, and thereby lessen its pleasantness as a place of recreation. I, therefore, placed the Abbey Church, or Minster, on the north side of the Cloister, and then, as the remaining mounds warranted, placed the other buildings, before mentioned, on their respective sides of the Cloister, and in their wonted order. Thus one great step was gained, the next was to find the relative positions of the other monastic buildings, with regard to the Minster and Cloister.

The Cistercians usually had, to the south-east of the Minster, a smaller cloister, on the east of which was the Infirmary and Noviciate, and on the south a Hall for conference, and any one who walks carefully over the Abbey Meadow, will find traces of these buildings eastward of the great Cloister, and consequently, in their due place—south-east of the Minster. The Barns, Bovaria, or Ox-stalls, Vaccaria, or Cow-sheds, etc., being unconnected with the religious duties of the Monastery, were probably in all monasteries arranged as appeared most convenient, without reference to symbolism, or regard to traditional position, but the Stabling was to the north-west of the Minster, and, for obvious reasons, not far from the Gate-house, which, in Cistercian houses, was usually to the west.

The Gate-house at Bordesley Abbey stood, without doubt, near the north-east corner of the present old Chapel-yard. This may be inferred from the fact that the Perambulation passed through the Gate-house into the old Chapel-yard.

Having found the position of the Gate-house, we may assume that the Stabling was near it, and if we place it on the left hand in passing from the Gate-house to the Minster, it would be in its proper position, according to Cistercian arrangement, to wit, to the north-west of the Minster.

Having, therefore, found a sure starting point in the great Cloister, I was enabled, by considering the monastic arrangement of the Cistercians, to trace out and give names to most of the same indicated by the mounds, not indeed by mere guess, but with great certainty, for all monasteries belonging to the same Order followed the arrangement in the disposition of their buildings, except where some peculiarity of situation compelled them to depart from it, or where there was some advantage to be gained by altering the position of a room.

Now, the positions of the different parts of Bordesley Abbey being ascertained, and the plan made out, I shall endeavour to present to the mental eye of the reader, by description, and to the physical eye, by illustrations, a picture of Bordesley Abbey in the days while it yet stood in the valley watered by the Arrow and its tributaries, and was esteemed one of the fairest and wealthiest of the Monasteries of Worcestershire, or, perhaps, of England.

Nor will this be so difficult a task as many may imagine—for Churches built by the same race of men and in the same age greatly resemble each other. Nor is this resemblance altogether confined to general appearance, each style has its own peculiar arches, mouldings, pillars, buttresses, towers, spires, roofs, and ornamental details. Moreover, the various Orders of Monks influenced architecture, so as to make it accord with their own peculiar views. The Clugniac made it express his longing for grandeur, the Benedictine his elegance and learning, the Cistercian his simplicity. The Cistercian, therefore, adopted the style of the age, but treated it with severity.

The finest Norman buildings were erected between 1120 and 1180, and Bordesley Abbey, as will be hereafter shewn, was built between these dates. At this time the master stone-cutters began to use the chisel in lieu of the axe, their mouldings were deeper, and cut with more precision, their ornaments were richer, and more abundant, and the courses of masonry were laid with such precision as to deceive the eye.* Norman architects, too, were just beginning to vault the aisles and narrow parts of their churches with stone, an art which succeeding ages carried to such perfection; but they still roofed the nave and wide parts with wood. About this time an immense number of churches were built and re-built. The Saxon Churches shared the same fate of the Saxon, and fell fast before the first race of men in Europe. Few buildings remain which can be said of a certainty to be Saxon, but of Norman we have many yet, in spite of restoring architects who cry up and down before bishops' palaces—Who will change old churches for new ones?

At the time of the founding of Bordesley Abbey, the art of building was making great progress; the work was becoming better executed, more highly-finished, and of lighter character. The masonry of this time was as good as that of any subsequent period, and the builders had no longer to waste material in absurdly thick walls and clumsy buttresses.

* William of Malmesbury.

Yet this progress will appear strange if we come to consider the state of the country at this time. Bordesley Abbey was built in an evil time. The throne of England had been seized by Stephen, who had to give away proud titles and broad lands to win the support of a fickle and turbulent aristocracy. He promised the clergy that their power, justice, and dignities, and the distribution of their goods, should be in the hands of the bishops, and, to gain the good opinion and good will of the people, he built monasteries. For a time all was well; but when the barons could no longer get lands and castles from the king, they seized those of each other.* Then they plundered the merchant, and the burgess, seized the flocks and herds of the farmer, and the person of the peasant. These besought the protection of the king, who upon seeking to avenge the wrongs of his people found his own castles manned against him. Many barons transferred their allegiance to Maude the Empress. The Norman race was divided against itself, and the oppressed Saxons stood aloof, hoping that when knaves fell out honest men might come by their own.

Then the Welsh rose along the Marshes, and spared none who spoke French; and David, king of Scotland, assembled his *uncleanly savages*,† and hastened to bring the third plague of Egypt into England. King Stephen drove them back and wasted the south of Scotland with fire and smoke. But he had no peace, for upon his return he found fresh enemies to contend with: Talbot held Hereford Castle against him; Robert of Gloucester fortified Bristol and Leeds; Lovel held Castle Cary; and Paganus defied the king from the towers of Ludlow. William Fitz-Alan abode all-armed in Shrewsbury, and De Mohun shut himself up in a strong castle, called Dunster, whence, issuing at times, he swept the land like a storm. While Stephen was thus fighting in the south and west, David again marched into England, with an army composed of Danes and Saxons, armed with cuirass and pike, Norman fugitives, with mail and lance, men of Galloway, half-naked, and armed with the slender lance of the ancient Briton, Scots, clad with striped woollen mantles, and armed with the long broad sword, and Scandinavians, who fought with the two-handed battle-axe of their ancestors. Then Stephen brought out the dusty old banners of St. Cuthbert of

* See Henry of Huntingdon and other writers. † Acts of King Stephen, see also William of Malmesbury.

Durham, St. Wilfrid of Ripon, and St. John of Beverley, under which alone he could hope that the Saxons would fight for him, in company with the Normans.* The plan succeeded; the Saxons who had laid aside the bills with which they fought at Hastings, and had assumed the long bow and cloth-yard arrow, joined with the Normans, and David's army was defeated in the Battle of the Standard. But in spite of this victory there was no peace for Stephen: *What, says an old priest and chronicler of those days, were the wars and toils of Saul, the Maccabees, or Alexander, in comparison with the struggles of King Stephen?*† For after a year of strife with a powerful priesthood, Stephen had to meet Maude the Empress, whose name and title had before divided his barons against him. But he was an indomitable fighter, and though his treasury was empty, his regalia pawned, and his gold and silver melted down to pay his mercenaries, he found means for a time to meet an enemy on whose side were enlisted the loyal attachment due to descent, the romantic devotion paid to a wronged lady, and the muscular christianity which drew its sword in defence of the widow and orphan. Stephen was overthrown at Lincoln, in 1140-1, and Maude was for a short time Queen of England. Twice during her short reign of eight months, she was at Devizes; the first time she went in triumph to receive the keys of the castle there, the second time she fled thither for safety, after the route of Winchester; and on one of these two occasions, either as a thank-offering for success, or the penitential offering of adversity, she issued the following Charter:

The Charter of Maude the Empress.

I, MAUDE, EMPRESS, *Daughter of King Henry I, and Sovereign Lady of the English, to the Archbishops, Bishops, Abbots, Earls, Barons, Viscounts, Justiciaries, and to all true Men, English and Norman, as well present as to come, greeting:*

BE it known unto you that I, for the love of God, for the souls of King Henry my Father, and of Queen Matilda my Mother, for the souls of my kindred and forefathers, and for the safety of Geoffrey, my Lord, Count of Andegavia, and for mine own safety, and for that of Henry, my first-born, and of my other sons, and for the peace and steadfastness of the Kingdom of England, have founded a certain Abbey, which is called Bordesley, of the Cistercian Order, in honour of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Heaven.

AND to the Abbey I have given, granted, and confirmed, all the land of Bordesley, and Teneshall, and Tudeshall, and Cobley, and Holloway, except the land of the park: and all the Lordship of Bidford and Northany, in wood and in plain, in meadow and pasture, in water and mill, and in all things pertaining thereto. Moreover the right of advowson and rule over the church

* Thierry's *Norman Conquest of England*.

† Acts of King Stephen.

of Tardebigge, with a virgate of land in the same village, and certain assartments [land cleared of trees by plucking them up by the roots], near the boundary of the land of the said Abbey, the new well at Wich, *de proprio labore suo*, and all their easements in the Forest of Feckenham, with all freedom of pannage [hog feeding] and pasture, and material for building, and of other things necessary for their use, and one fish pond at Hernley, with the land belonging thereto. Moreover I grant all these things to remain freely, quietly, well, and in peace from all service, toll, and secular custom, for ever, and confirm it with the impress of my seal.

WITNESSES : Robert, Earl of Gloster,
Waleran, Earl of Mellent,
Milo, Earl of Hereford,
William de Pontearch, Chamberlain,
William de Bellocampo,
William Diffublato,
Geoffrey de Walterville,
Jocelin de Bailloe,
Robert de Trumanville,

At Devizes.

SEAL—a Queen seated : LEGEND—Mathildis D.S. Romanorum Regina.

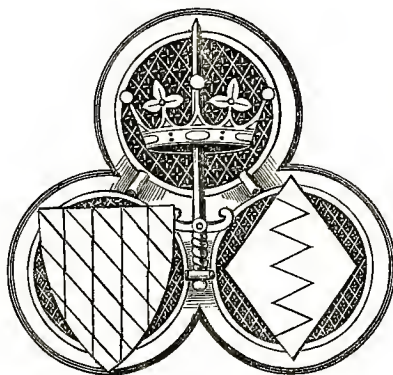
But though Maude issued this Charter for the building of Bordesley Abbey, it is probable that not a stone of it was laid during her stay in England, and that the statement that the first stone was laid by one of the Witnesses to her Charter, viz., Waleran de Beaumont, Earl of Mellent and Worcester, is quite true. Indeed, Waleran is spoken of in some works as the founder. Milles, in his *Catalogue of Honour*, thus speaks of him :



Waleran de Beaumont.

1144 A.D.—Waleran de Beaumont was 1st Earle of Worcester after the Norman Conquest, being created by King Stephen in 1144, to the king's great prejudice and disadvantage, because in the time of dissention he did take part with Maude the Emperesse against King Stephen ; he was eldest sone and heyre of Robert de Bellomont, Erle of Mellent and Leicester, by his wife Elizabeth, daughter of Hugh, that great Erle of Viromond, and he was twinne with Robert Beaumont (surnamed Crookback), 2nd Earle of Leicester ; he founded the Abbey of Bordesley in England for Cistercian Monks in the time of Henry the Second, and at length died, having taken on him the habit of a Monk, at Pratelles in Normandy, the 13th of Henry II, 1166.

Owing to his having laid the first stone of Bordesley Abbey, Waleran de Beaumont is mentioned in the *Neustria Pia* as the founder of it, and it is probable that the Abbey owes its existence to him much more than to Maude the Empress, whose pride soon lost her the throne of the Conqueror. His Charter was much the same as that of the Empress. It is however, addressed to the Bishop of Worcester, and of course the Abbey is built for the souls of *his* kindred as well as for the soul of Henry his King.



Armorial bearings, etc., of Waleran de Beaumont and his Countess.

It may here perhaps be well to mention what is known concerning those for whose eternal welfare Bordesley Abbey was founded. Waleran's grandfather had fought at Hastings, and had smitten down the English in a marvellous manner, and had been rewarded with land and titles by the Conqueror.* Waleran's father had been equally great as a Counsellor, when a boy he had encountered Cardinals in Logic, and had beaten the school-men at their own weapons; he was afterwards made Chancellor to King Henry I, in the Holy Land, and was esteemed the greatest politician among all who dwelt at Jerusalem. The man he hated was forthwith humbled, the man he loved was exalted and honoured. His mind was enlightened, his eloquence persuasive, his shrewdness acute; he was foreseeing and wily, and his counsels were like those of Ahithophel, as if a man had inquired at the Oracle of God.†

Such a man could not be otherwise than rich. He possessed towns and villages, farms and mills, woods and water; he had chests of gold, of silver, and of precious stones. His

* *Neustria Pia*.

† Henry of Huntingdon.

castle was hung with skilfully wrought tapestry, and furnished with a magnificence that surprised even those that dwelt in kings' palaces. But to gain this wealth he shrank from no villany; he could devour widows' houses, and seize the inheritance of the orphan; and Ivo, Earl of Leicester, was not the only one whom he cozened out of a wife and an estate. But as is sometimes the case with bad men, he at length suffered one of the evils he had inflicted upon others; some earl, whose name is not given by the chronicler, carried off his wife, and Robert of Mellent never smiled more. The rest of his days were bitter to him; and on his death bed, according to the opinion of those times, he shewed his folly by refusing to leave money for charitable uses for the good of his soul, saying: That he left all his wealth to his children, and with it the duty of acting charitably for the good of their father's soul.

We have no record of what his son Robert did; crooked in mind as in body, little good can be said of him; but Waleran de Beaumont, Earl of Mellent, did at least build Bordesley Abbey, and endowed it for the good of his father's soul.

Of the exact time when Waleran de Beaumont laid the first stone we have no certain account. The annals of Winchcombe give the year 1136 as the date of its foundations. Nash says about the year 1138, but both these dates are before the time of Maude's arrival in England. Milles, in his *Catalogue of Honour*, says the Abbey was founded in the reign of Henry II. In the *Catalogue of Religious Houses in England* it is thus spoken of:

Bordesleix: Titulo: S: Mariæ: Fundatrix: Mathild: Imperatrix: Cistercienses.

Also:

Bordeslegæ: Titula: S: Mariæ: Fundatores: Henricus: Rex: et: Mathildis:
Imperatrix: Præmonstratenses: Albi.

But singularly enough the former, which answers exactly to the title of Bordesley Abbey in Worcestershire, is described as being in the County of Buckingham, and the latter, which is mentioned in the Catalogue as being in Worcestershire, does not answer exactly to the title of it, for it was not founded for Præmonstratensians.

One thing, however, is clear enough, viz., that this Abbey was fully established and in good working order soon after the year 1148, for we read in Dugdale of its sending monks about that time to *propagate* the Abbey of Merevale, which Robert

Earl Ferrers had built near Atherstone. And shortly after, in the days of Haymo, second Abbot of Bordesley, of its sending two monks to Radmore, to instruct the brethren there in the Cistercian discipline.

Waleran de Beaumont would, moreover, be likely to be chosen by the Empress Maude to complete her design, for although he had sworn allegiance to Stephen, and had been rewarded with the hand of his daughter, the title of Earl of Worcester, and the gift of a stately castle in that city, he had, in spite of his allegiance and the favours he had received from Stephen, escorted Maude, when obliged to fly from Arundel, in safety to Winchester. The rendering of such a service to an enemy is indeed in accordance with the chivalrous spirit of that age; but it is probable that this romantic journey to Winchester shook the loyalty of Waleran de Beaumont, for we shortly after find him fighting feebly for his Sovereign at Lincoln, and after that witnessing at Devizes the signing of Maude's Charter for the building of Bordesley Abbey. Singularly enough, too, the name of his enemy, William, Earl of Warwick, is appended to the same instrument. Stephen had taken from this Earl the Castle of Worcester, and had given it to the Earl of Warwick (de Bellomont). Yet the two witnessed the signing of the Charter, and both gave gifts to the Abbey.

We next read of Waleran de Beaumont as a Soldier of the Cross:

"Among the noble men who accompanied Louis, King of France, was one most illustrious man, Waleran, Co. de Mellent, retaining, among other high proofs of his good manners, the love, derived from his ancestors, of building churches and spreading religion. Already had he built the Abbey of Bordesley, in England, when he was Earl of Worcester, which earldom he had acquired with his wife, the daughter of King Stephen."—*Neustria Pia*.



Waleran de Beaumont.

Returning from the Holy Land, Waleran de Beaumont's ship was assailed by a furious tempest. The sailors despaired of their lives. Reginald de Gerpumville, being himself either very poor, or very politic, persuaded Waleran to vow to Notre Dame-de-Bons-Secours, to build an Abbey for White Monks, in case they got safe to land. The ship was wrecked, but Waleran de Beaumont, Reginald de Gerpumville, and some others, got safe to land, some on spars and some on broken pieces of the wreck.

Respecting the fulfilment of this vow, Waleran consulted Haymo, the second Abbot of Bordesley, who at that time was on his way to attend the General Chapter of the Order at Cisteaux,* for the brethren of the Monastery of Mortui-Maris, looked with no small degree of jealousy upon the projected Abbey of La Valasse, and cast every obstacle they could in the way of the building of a new abbey, which they feared might injure their own.

Waleran de Beaumont, like many a Norman baron of those days, ended his days in the cloister. His life had been an active one, and he had encountered almost all the perils men could encounter in those days. He had taken up arms against his sovereign, and had been driven from castle to castle. He had been hunted as a rebel from place to place, and had been glad to disguise himself to escape being taken. He had been a captive, and the dungeons of Rouen, Bridgnorth, and Wallingford had echoed to his footsteps. Again, by a turn of Fortune's wheel, he had been restored to favour, and re-instated in his castles and demesnes. He had fought for the two rivals, Stephen and Maude, and had, probably, deceived both. He had been a Soldier of the Cross, and had heard mass, and smitten down infidels before the walls of Jerusalem. After perils by land, he encountered perils by sea, and was shipwrecked on his return from the Holy Land, and only saved from perishing in the sea by the aid of a piece of the wreck. Then, having taken means for fulfilling the vow he had made in the hour of danger, he came again into England and set up the standard of rebellion at Worcester, holding his castle, the King's gift, against the giver. Stephen burned the city of Worcester, but

* The situation of the Abbey of Mortui-Maris accorded well with its name. It stood by the side of a bituminous lake, surrounded by barren hills, like Zoar in the valley of the Dead Sea. (*Mortuum-Mare, unde Mortimer*).

Waleran kept his house like a strong man armed, till his brother, the Earl of Leicester, raised the siege.

At length, wearied with a life of continual action, he turned his thoughts towards the only place where rest could then be found—the Cloister. This must have been as pleasing to the souls of knights, worn out with many wars, as the Lotos-Land to the followers of Ulysses. The Lotos-Land of the Greek, and the Island of Apples of romance mythology, were fables, but the cloister was real, and the only place where peace could be found without shame, and rest without idleness. Hither then went Waleran de Beaumont, and at Pratelles, a monastery which his father had built, assumed the cowl and the tonsure, and died, said an old writer: *amid the rejoicings of the angels, in the reign of human redemption*, MCLXVI.

Such was the end of the Builder of Bordesley Abbey.



CHAPTER II.



It might well be supposed that an Abbey built in so evil a time as that of King Stephen would be a plain, if not a rude, unsightly structure, larger indeed, but little better as regards its architecture, than the houses which men built for themselves in those days, not knowing how soon those houses might be but a heap of smoking ashes. Indeed, in those days, the man whose house suggested the idea of his possessing ever so little wealth, ran the risk of being smoked with the smoke of green wood, hung up by the heels, or crushed in a cruet-box, until he gave it up to some one of the petty tyrants, whose 1,800 castles scowled defiance and oppression through the land. The houses of the people were built of wood in the towns, and in the country of wattle-and-dab. The walls of the town were a protection to the former, the latter were clustered for safety round the abbey, or the castle. He who journeyed from one town to another, saw not the pretty white-washed cottages, which now oversprinkle the country, but he might, perhaps, at long intervals, see a moated grange, a mill, or the rudely fortified house of the thane, or the franklin. If he saw a castle, he passed it with fear and trembling, unless he knew the disposition of its lord to be courteous, for in those days, every man who had wealth enough built himself a castle, and, adds the Saxon Chronicle, *filled it with devils and evil men.* Shepherd and swineherds led forth their flocks and herds in the morning, and returned with them in the evening, from the vale and the forest. At the approach of an enemy, vassals betook themselves with their goods to the castle of their feudal lord, and from its walls beheld the destruction of their rudely built houses. When the siege was raised, they issued

forth again, and in a little while, their reed-covered houses were rebuilt, and no trace of the mischief remained. But while trumpets were everywhere blown for wars, and towns were being leaguered, and castles were falling before the battering-ram, one kind of building seemed to flourish. Augustinian and Benedictine monasteries were springing up in every walled town, and Cistercian monasteries in every green vale. Whilst without the cloister there was confusion worse confounded, within it there was peace. The wise revered the Cloister, the superstitious feared it, and the poor loved it.

The serf found in it a refuge from tyranny, for no feudal lord could refuse freedom to his slave, if that slave were desirous of receiving even the inferior Orders of the Church. He could, indeed, demand from the abbot the price of freedom, and this was readily paid from the monastic treasury for any one who proved himself worthy of admission into the brotherhood. Hence, the monastery was the remedy against the feudal castle. Those kings, whose thrones were unsteadfast, built monasteries and churches, to gain favour with the priesthood and the people. The prelates, too, not only built and restored cathedrals, but also erected for themselves noble palaces. Nor was this episcopal magnificence murmured at by the people, for the bishop had often stood between the oppressor and the oppressed. Alexander, Bishop of Lincoln, restored his cathedral in a style exquisite for its beauty, and walled the city in a wonderful manner. At Newark, in a beautiful meadow by the Trent, he built a castle that was deemed florid in those days of deep and rich stone-carving; and another at Sleaford, not a whit inferior to it in beauty. Among the prelatial castles of the land was the Bishop of Salisbury's, at Devizes, then held to be one of the most stately in Europe; so that we should greatly err if we were to suppose that fine examples of architecture could not exist in such times.

But a great deal of this magnificence of architecture was denied to monks of the Cistercian Order like those of Bordesley. While other Orders were laying down floors variegated with marbles, or with stones brought from Jerusalem, or holy places afar off, the Monks of Bordesley used quarries, baked in their own kilns.* The chancels of

* This is probably true of the first house of St. Mary of Bordesley. From the late excavations, however, it is evident that at a later period the Monks paved the Minster with encaustic tiles of great beauty and variety of pattern. The armorial tiles, being of the same patterns as those at Malvern, were, probably, made there.

other Orders shone with gold, and glittered with jewels, that of Bordesley was painted in tempera. Other Orders might build great towers at the west end of their churches, and adorn them with pinnacles, but the Brethren of Bordesley could have but one, rising from the centre of their cruciform church. The gorgeous solemnities of stained glass was forbidden to the Cistercian; neither might he spend moneys entrusted to him for the use of the poor, in useless turrets and curiosities of architecture. The severity of his architecture and his rule, the plainness of his dress and his service, and the humble nature of his employment, provoked the sneer of the learned Benedictine, and irritated the pride of the Clunac, to whose pomp and vanity the simplicity of the Cistercians seemed a reproach.

According to an old verse—the Franciscan, the begging friar, loved the town; the accomplished Jesuit, the great city; the Benedictine, the mountain; and the Cistercian, the valley. And not only did the Cistercian choose the valley, but he also chose valleys far removed from the haunts of men; the rules of the Order say: *Cænobia nostra nunquam construantur nisi in locis, ab omni conversatione, et cohabitatione hominum separatis*. And dreary indeed were some of these remote places. When the Cistercian Monks first began to build their house in the Vale of Fountains, the dreariness of the place was appalling, and men might well ask if they had gone thither to sing *miserere* to the wolves. Kingswood Abbey, to which one of the Abbots of Bordesley was translated, stood, as its charter says, in a certain desert. And, indeed, many of the valleys in which Cistercian houses were built, have names expressive of gloom and penitence. Citeaux was built in the Vale of Wormwood; Furness in the Vale of Deadly Nightshade; and a Cistercian house in Normandy, historically connected with Bordesley, was called, from its being situated near a bituminous lake—the Monastery of the Dead Sea.

But the Monks of Bordesley chose for the site of their house, a spot lying to the south-east of a low hill, rising near the middle of the shallow vale, which extends from the Lickey to Alcester. Through this vale runs a stream called the Arrow, into which numerous smaller streams descend from the ranges of low hills which extend along each side of the vale. One of these tributary streams running through the red marl of the valley probably gave the name of RED-DYCHE to a hamlet, which

formerly stood on its banks near to the Abbey, but which, now removed a quarter of a mile to the south-west, has become a populous township, and the seat of the English Needle and Fish-hook manufactures. The sides of the hills were clad with dense masses of oaks, then the weed of the neighbourhood. In the valley were large meres frequented by myriads of wild fowl, and bogs into which Will-o'-the-wisp misled strangers. The roads were few and evil, little better than mere tracks through an immense forest. There were two exceptions to this rule, the old British Saltway which ran from Droitwich across the northern extremity of the valley on its way to Lincoln, and the Roman Ryknield Street,* which ran lengthways through the valley to Alcester, in those days a town of smiths, though somewhat decayed, owing to their having withstood St. Egwin, as Alexander the Coppersmith did the Apostle. According to the *Nova Legenda Angliæ*, when the Saint begun preaching, they drowned his voice by beating with their hammers upon their anvils. The Saint shook the dust from off his feet as a testimony against them, and they were rewarded according to their works. Along this Ryknield Street, men brought the iron ore from the region round about Dudley, on the backs of horses, to be smelted at Alcester and other places where wood was plentiful, for it was found to be better to bring the ore to the fuel, than to carry the wood to where the mineral was found.

Having fixed upon a site for their monastery, the brethren began clearing that spot of the trees that encumbered the ground. The more skilful of them, directed probably by some master-builder, engaged by Waleran de Beaumont, formed the plan of the new building; some of the monks began to hew† stones for the walls, others to mix mortar, while a third party would be felling timber for the roof, for the roofing of the first Abbey of Bordesley was of wood; the aisle indeed might have been vaulted

* The road of the Upper Icen, often confounded with Icknield Street, the road of the Lower Icen. See Dr. Giles' Appendix to *Richard of Cirencester*.

† The Monks of Bordesley seem to have used stones from many places; the greater part of the red sandstone probably came from Tardebigge Quarry, the antiquity of which is well seen from the size of the oaks now growing in it. In this quarry, too, is found stone greatly resembling that which, when first exposed, during the excavations, appeared blue, but as it became dry lost its colour, and showed merely as white sandstone: the inner side of the walls were of this stone, while the outer were of red sandstone, the

over with stone, for they were narrow, but the Norman architects had not yet ventured to vault over so wide a space as the nave of a church.

When the ground plan was worked out, and the foundations prepared, Waleran de Beaumont came to lay the first stone, which was, without doubt, laid either at the north-east angle of the tower, or of the chancel. On such occasions, it was usual for him who laid a foundation stone, to place upon it a considerable sum of money, and oft-times to place at the disposal of the abbot and convent, craftsmen—such as masons, carpenters, and smiths—to work at his expense for a term of years, or till the buildings were completed. And, since it brought no little money into the hands of the brethren, they usually got persons of wealth to lay other important stones of the building, such as the corner stones of the north, or south transepts, &c. On these occasions vast multitudes assembled; earls, barons, knights, ladies, abbots, friars, and monks, of neighbouring convents, all eager to see the ceremony, and to share in the good work, and the festivities which followed. After that the work of building began; the Cloister was marked out, and round it were grouped the necessary buildings: the Chapter-house, Dormitory, Refectory, Sacristy, Library, Parlours, the Scriptorium, for writing, the Sutrinum, for making and mending clothes, the Kitchen, and other offices, Bakehouse, Brewhouse, Dove-cote, &c. These being begun upon, they set about damming-up the water, for the double purpose of making ponds to supply them with fish, and reservoirs of water to turn their mills; next to this, they laid out their orchard, planting stocks to be grafted in the following year, with the choicest fruits of Worcestershire, and set out their garden and herbary, planting in the one, pot-herbs, and in the other, herbs having medicinal properties. The Minster, in the meanwhile, slowly rising above all the other buildings of the Abbey, and forming as to its tower, a guide to the traveller, who sought the hospitality of the Monks of Bordesley.

Then came the Consecration of the Minster, for this was esteemed necessary, in order to expel the Devil and all unclean things, and make it a fit dwelling for the Most

great pier in the south transept was built of the white stone. The fragments of shafts, etc., which were dug up, were some of Inkberrow stone, some of Rock-hill stone, and some of Oolite from Broadway, of this last, too, was the step of the Chapter House. The cause of this great variety is owing partly to stone being given by many land-owners as a donation.

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High. For the Devil has always been supposed to resist the building and consecrating of Churches to the utmost. A black devil sate on the foundation stone of St. Mary's of Worcester, nor could eighty men lift the stone into its place. St. Oswald was told of this, whereupon he took holy water and sprinkled the corner on which the Devil sate. The Devil then removed to the next corner, from this he was driven by the same means, and was at length obliged to leave the stone altogether, and then three men lifted it with ease.

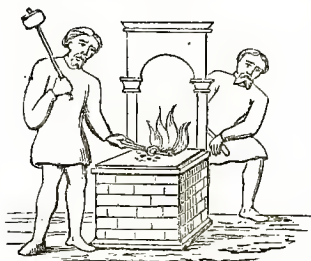
In like manner had the Devil to be driven out of a Orleton church in Herefordshire. Driven successively by the power of holy water from chancel to nave, and thence to baptistry and belfry, he at length escaped by a lubber-hole in the spire. Gregory relates the expulsion of uncleanness in the form of a hog from a church, the swine vanishing from sight immediately it was expelled.

When the day of Consecration arrived, Simon, Bishop of Worcester, stood before the west door-way of Bordesley Abbey; all persons were put out of the building, save the Deacon. Then the Bishop, standing before the door, consecrated holy water, putting salt therein. Then the Deacon within lighted twelve torches, placing them before twelve crosses, painted on the walls of the Minster. Then the Bishop, and Clergy, and Monks, and people assembled, went thrice round the outside of the Minster, and with a branch of hyssop sprinkled the walls thereof with holy water. Every time he passed the west door, Simon smote the threshold with his staff saying: *Tollite portas principes vestras, et elevamini portæ æternales, et introibit Rex gloriæ.* Then he within asked: *Quis est iste Rex gloriæ?* To whom the Bishop replied: *Dominus fortis in prelio.* But at the third time, the door being unbolted, the Bishop, with a few of his clergy, went in, saying: *Pax huic domui;* the people—knight, noble, or serf—remaining without. Then, having said the Litanies, Bishop Simon made a cross in ashes and sand on the pavement of the Church.

Then going up to the altar he said: *Deus in adiutorium, etc.,* and with holy water made crosses upon each corner of it. Next he walked seven times round the altar, at each time sprinkling it with holy water from a branch of hyssop. Then he sprinkled the Church again, putting the remaining holy water at the foot of

the altar ; having done this, at the four angles of the sepulchre, where the reliques were to be deposited in a chest with three grains of frankincense, four crosses were made with chrism, the reliques* being deposited in the sepulchre, a tablet with a cross in the middle of it was put over them, then the great stone which covered the altar was fitted to it, and anointed with oil in five places, and afterwards with chrism, then a cross was made on the front of it with chrism, after which incense was burnt upon it in the five places. Lastly, it was cleansed with fine linen.† The Bishop then anointed the twelve crosses with chrism, and thus ended the Consecration of the Minster of Bordesley Abbey.‡

The traveller, 700 years ago, whether knight, pilgrim, or merchant, after passing through the royal forest of Feckenham, descending by the old road, now called Musket's-way, and crossing Redditch Common,|| would come upon the rude huts of the Abbey serfs, and see these hinds learning the management of sheep, oxen, and swine, from the



Brethren of the Abbey. In another place he might see the smith, a mighty man in those days, labouring at the forge, making the instruments of husbandry required by the Monks, shoeing horses, or making shears for sheep, for the Cistercians were great sheep-farmers, and great dealers in wool.

The smith would perhaps be the property of the Abbey, for it was no unusual thing for wealthy men to give *in pure charity* one of his born serfs to a convent, for the *good of his father's soul, etc.* Thus, Peter de Cobezan, son of Peter of Studley, after giving to the Monks of Bordesley ten acres of land, at Westcroft, near Bidford, makes them a present of a certain smith, named Robert, with all

* Some portion of the relics of a Saint was formerly placed underneath all altars ; in fact, the presence of relics was indispensable. The altars in the Catacombs at Rome are built over the relics of early Christian Saints. *And I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the Word of GOD.*—*Apocalypse*, vi, 9.

† Dugdale's *History of Warwickshire*.

‡ Simon, Bishop of Worcester, was a benefactor to Bordesley Abbey ; probably it was on this occasion that he gave them the land at Choleville, an island near Wich (Droitwich.)

|| Redditch Common was formerly much larger than it is now, comprising not only all the land now known as the Common, but also extending far to the south-west of the present town of Redditch.

things that belonged to him. It is also recorded that Richard, Bishop of Coventry, gave them a villein, with his tenure, *val. iiii.* and *vid.* yearly; Egelinus de Dummans gave them his born serf, Hugh, the son of Snellhavick, and pronounced him free of all service to himself. As proprietors of the soil, too, the Monks could command the services of the Saxon serfs, and the Norman villeins born on their lands, but serf and villein* found in the Monk, not only a fellow-labourer, but a brother and a friend. Some of these Gibeonites, however, were far from satisfied with their condition, since we find Henry III. giving the Monks of Bordesley power to claim all villeins and runaways who, since the death of Henry II, might have fled from the Abbey lands, and forbade any to detain them, under penalty of *xl.*

Passing by the houses of these Abbey serfs, and crossing the Red-Ditch, or, as it is now called, Pigeon's Brook, by a foot-bridge, or, if he were on horseback, fording it, the traveller would have on his left a great embankment, raised for the double purpose of damming-up water for a fish-pond, and of protecting the Abbey from floods, to which, owing to its low situation, and proximity to so many streams, it must have been peculiarly liable, and then, bearing somewhat to the right, he would stand before the Abbey itself. Now, though I purpose describing the Abbey more minutely, as it appeared at a later time than this, it may be well here to describe those parts of the first building which especially gave character to it, and distinguished it from buildings erected in the following century; and in doing this I shall, for the benefit of local readers, refer to examples of this style in buildings, as near as possible to Redditch.

The general appearance of Bordesley Abbey at this time was massive and sombre. A low massive tower flanked the gateway. The gateway arch, and indeed all other arches in the building, were round, and the doorways generally deep and cavernous, decorated with zigzag ornaments and nook shafts, supporting cushion capitals, sparingly enriched, such doorways as may yet be seen at Studley and Alvechurch, and other village churches in this locality, for there was a beauty about the Norman doorway which preserved it

* Of these villeins there were two kinds, one immediately bound to the person of his lord, the other attached to the manor. The former could be given away, the latter were attached to the soil, and could not be given away without it.

from demolition, when every other part of a church was pulled down to be re-built in the fashion of the day.

The buttresses were mere flat broad projections on the face of the walls, or at the angles of the towers.

The windows were small, narrow, and round-headed, and examples of these are less frequently to be met with, owing to their being far inferior to the windows that succeeded them, both in beauty and utility. I know of no examples of this style of window in this neighbourhood, except the modern ones of St. Luke's, Headless Cross.

The belfry windows were larger than the others, and were placed in couplets on all sides of the tower, in order to allow of a free emission of sound.

The tower of the Minster would be heavy, of no great height, and, without either battlements on pinnacles, roofed with a conical roof of wood, covered with tiles or lead, from the apex of which arose an iron cross, surmounted with the weather-cock, which has for centuries been used by the Church to remind men of the fall of St. Peter.

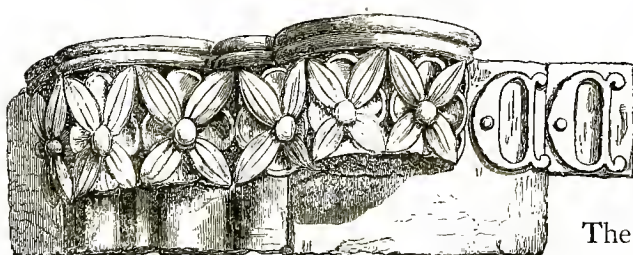
Norman towers were not lofty, and even when carried to a moderate height, had walls of great thickness, strengthened with buttresses. Yet the masonry, though massive, was often bad, and worshippers not unfrequently met with the fate of the eighteen men in Siloam.



Norman Fragments.

Remains of the first House of St. Mary of Bordesley.

CHAPTER III.



YEARS later, the appearance of Bordesley Abbey, and the country round it had changed considerably.

The Abbey buildings, doubtless held the same relative positions to each other as before, but they were larger, and some which had been temporarily built of wood were now constructed of stone. The ground plan of the Minster was the same as heretofore, but the general appearance of the building was lighter and more ornamental. Most of the Norman doorways had disappeared, and had been replaced by later ones; some, indeed, of great beauty, as will be seen from the initial at the beginning of this chapter. The round-headed windows had given place to pointed ones, some divided by mullions and ornamented with early tracery. The nave had been altogether rebuilt; clustered columns had there taken the place of the Norman piers, but in the south transept, one, at least, of these remained massive, and four square.* The rule of the Order forbidding variegated pavements and stained glass had been cast aside. The floor of the Minster showed beautiful arrangements of foliage, geometrical patterns, and the arms of many a noble house. As the monks passed in procession into the choir, their white garments were tinged by the rays which fell aslant from the windows. In some parts of the building, tabernacle work was delicately cut in stone and enriched with crimson and gold.

Nor was there less change without. Few Norman features remained, the round had

* Discovered during the excavations, as also were some other matters stated in this description.

become pointed, the buttresses were no longer flat, but stood out boldly wherever strength was needed; a few pinnacles might be seen at the angles, lighter crosses and fleurs-de-lys crowned the gables, and a loftier tower rose above the trees in the valley.

The graves of the monks were thick in the earth, fifteen abbots lay beneath the cloister pavement, and the tombs of barons were to be seen in the Minster. There lay the Black Dog of Arden,* and there six monks sang for the soul of Ranulph, the great Earl of Chester, who had died under the ban of the Bishop of Coventry.†

The appearance of the country around the Abbey was also greatly changed—the hamlet of Red-dyche had grown-up near the great pool to the west of the Abbey, and its inhabitants went daily to hear matins and masses in the chapel of St. Stephen; and once a year, the poor assembled at the gate-house, to receive the twenty-five pairs of warm shoes that were given away there for the good of the soul of Sampson of Bromsgrove. Though the monks dealt largely in wool, the staple of the country at that time, they had also much land under cultivation. One of their farms, from its lying near the gate-house, was called the gate-house farm: before the monks came, the thistle and the thorn reminded men of the curse of toil until death, but now these were replaced by the ear of corn, symbolical of the resurrection unto life.

But apart from agriculture there was another employment for the inhabitants of Red-dyche. In the neighbourhood of the Abbey Meadows and elsewhere may yet be seen many pieces of iron-cinder, or slag, the vestiges of a trade once carried on in many places, now strictly agricultural, to wit, iron-smelting. The Romans had smelted iron near Worcester, and vestiges of their works were to be seen two hundred years ago. The smelting of iron was carried at first in those districts where the ore was found, but so destructive was this manufacture to the woods and forests, that in course of years fuel grew scarce in the neighbourhood of the mines, and the works had to be removed to more wooded districts. In very

* Dugdale's *History of Waricksbire*.

† Ranulph, or Randolph, Earl of Chester, was the subject of many a romance and ballad. He is alluded to in the *Visions of Piers Ploughman*:

I cannot parfitely my **Paternoster** as the priest it singeth,
But I can rhymes of Robin Hood and **Randulf**, Earl of Chester.

remote times, the iron works had travelled from Wolverhampton and Dudley to Birmingham. Hutton endeavours to show that the Aston furnace must have been worked from a very early time.* Birmingham, Bromsgrove, Evesham, and Alcester, were all towns of smiths. The first smelting furnaces were mere wind-blasts, being built in places where nature supplied a current of wind. Water power was afterwards sought to work the bellows or the tilt hammer, as described in Schiller's Song of the Bell. Though the iron works of Sussex have long been extinct, numerous artificial ponds called *Hammer Ponds* remain to show where it was once carried on. Such ponds, now dry, existed in the neighbourhood of Redditch.

The Abbots of Monasteries paid great attention to the manufacture of iron from the ore. Extensive beds of cinders remain in the neighbourhood of Rievaulx and Hackness, in Yorkshire. Wire mills still remain at Tintern; the Abbot of Flaxley had one stationary and one *itinerant* forge, and an old house known as *The Forge* stands near the site of Bordesley Abbey.†

Many monks were skilful workers in metals. St. Dunstan is said to have had a forge in his bed-room, and there, too, he is said to have pinched the Devil's nose with his tongs. Anketil, a Monk of St. Alban's, was almost unrivalled as a worker in metals. A pair of candlesticks of his making were, by Pope Adrian the IV, consecrated to St. Peter. Other monks constructed clocks and curious engines, and one, a Monk of Bamborough, was, like King Uzziah, skilful in making catapults and balistæ.

Knowing, therefore, that the smelting and working of metals was not foreign to the habits of the monks, and seeing how numerous were the workers in iron in the neighbouring towns, and how plentiful the fuel and water power in the vicinity of the Abbey, it will not be deemed improbable that the working in iron was one of the occupations of the inhabitants of Redditch. Nor, unless we allow the former existence of some now extinct manufacture, will it be easy to account for the great dams which extend

* *History of Birmingham.*

† In 1725, there was also a Forge between Ipsley and Studley.

across the valley, running up to Alvechurch, and upon which grow trees, perhaps contemporaries of the Abbots of Bordesley.

Nor will it be foreign to our subject, to take a hasty glance at the country around Redditch, and enumerate the Religious Orders which were, perhaps, in constant communication with the Monks of Bordesley. On the visit of Edward III to Bordesley, we may suppose that Religious, from all the houses near, would send some one thither to represent their Order, and assure the King that he was not forgotten in their prayers. From his house, under the shadow of the Norman Castle of Peter of Studley,* came the Canon Regular of St. Augustin, wearing the white surplice, black cloak, and curious four-cornered cap of his Order. From the Monastery of *Our Ladye of ye Isle*, at Alcester, and from Evesham, and Pershore, came the Black Monks of St. Benedict. From Stoneleigh and Malvern, came the Cistercian. Worcester, Coventry, and Warwick, could supply Monks and Friars of all kinds, *black, white, grey, and smoky.*†

Yet there were some religions who would not be seen upon such an occasion, for it was only upon urgent religious missions that the White Nuns of Cook Hill, or the Black Nuns of Wroxhall, could leave the walls of their Cloister.

The Abbey had been enriched from time to time by the gifts of the living and the bequests of the dying. The Monks of Bordesley had possessions in Worcestershire, Warwickshire, and Gloucestershire. In Worcestershire they had the Manor of Bordesley, Tardebigge, Redditch, Streche-Bentley, Cobley, Tutnill, Bulland;‡ they had the Grange at Hewell, the Rectory at Tardebigge, and the Advowson of the Chapel of St. Stephen of Bordesley.

In Warwickshire they had Osmarely, now called Bordesley Park, probably that part of the demense of Bordesley which Master Hugh Latimer was *minded to ask Master Secretary Cromwell for a good slice of, because he could not have the use of his Park at*

* In Studley, near the gate of the Priory, was a Hospital for wayfaring men, being lame or halt.

† Heptameron.

‡ They had also the Fish-pools and Holy-fields in the parish of Feckenham, and the Granges of Sydenhall, of Ley, and Hawley, exempt from the Forest of Feckenham.

*Alvechurch** *Haunted Hilborough* was theirs, and they were Lords of Stretton-on-Fosse, and of *Drunken Bidford*. They had possessions at Rudbrook, Ashorne, Tisoe, Oxhill, Edston, Snitterfield, Binton, Kington, Langley, Songar, Bearley, Clarendon, and Oversley.

In Gloucestershire they had the Church of Wickwane, and Cumbe, near Chipping Campden, and here may be seen one of their tithe-barns, now incorporated in the buildings of Campden House.

In Powys-land, on a rocky hill, in the mouth of one of the passes into Wales, stood a Norman fortress, called Richard's Castle; to the north and south ran an endless chain of hills, cleft by ravines, through which, in the days of the Lord-Marchers, the Welsh, descending, burned up the face of the land like a stream of lava. A bow-shot from the castle was a well, which in March and September threw up the bones of frogs.† From the hill above the castle a man saw to the west a land of mountains, the stronghold of a race of men who at that time were feared as magicians and despised as savages;‡ who spoke a tongue better understood by the Devil than by man||—while to the west the fertile valley of the Teme extended into Worcestershire. In consideration of possessions in Stretton-on-Fosse,§ the Monks of Bordesley, besides paying *xs.*, had to find a foot-soldier to guard this castle for eight days yearly—a duty to which he would go with the reluctance of a man who had heard of and believed in the enchantment, of Merlin and Taliesin.

* See *Life of Latimer*, in Parker Library.

† The Bone-well.

‡ At Constantinople the existence of a race like the Welsh was scarcely credited.

|| Hotspur: Now I perceive the Devil understands Welsh.—*Shakspeare*.

§ Touching part of the town of Stretton-on-Fosse, Dugdale says: But it continues not long in the line of Cumin, for Walter Cumin gave it to the Monks of Bordesley, at which time it was accounted three hides, whose grant Henry Hubauld (an ancestor of the Hubands, of Ipsley) of whom it was held, confirmed for the yearly rent of *xs.*, and the before specified service of a footman, &c., which was to be performed in the guarding of Richard's Castle. But it seems that the Monks of Bordesley obtained more lands here in Stretton-on-Fosse, besides these, for in the fourth of Edward I, I find they had *iv* hides, and in the ninth of Edward II, were certified to be lords of the town, which, being the greatest part thereof, continued with them until the Dissolution.—Dugdale's *History of Warwickshire*.

These, therefore, would be the flourishing days of the Monks of Bordesley. Their flocks and herds were to be seen at a distance from the Abbey, not to be reached in less than two days. The lowing of their horned beasts might be heard at Edston.* Their sheep bleated in the Vale of the Red Horse;† their swine grunted through the Forest of Feckenham;‡ and the voice of their turtles was heard in the land near Binton.§ Their boat passed toll free through the floodgates at Hilborough, on the Avon, and everywhere there, save within the floodgates, they had the right of fishing.¶ The hum of their mills, at Bidford Grange, was heard far down the river, and many, doubtless, took their corn thither, in the hope of spiritual advantages.¶¶ They had the whole Lordship of Bidford,** and sat there in judgment upon bread and beer.†† The Monasteries of Merevale and Stoneleigh had received their first instruction in Cistercian discipline from

* Peter de Montfort granted to the Monks of Bordesley, Common of Pasture within the precincts of his Lordship at Edston—to wit, for xv beasts, ii draught horses, and cc sheep, according to the great hundred, and if any part of the Common should afterwards be reduced to tillage by himself or his heirs, the said Monks might put their cattle upon it after the corn should be cut and carried away.

† At Tisoe, where the Monks of Bordesley had iii yard land and a half.

‡ See Maude's Charter: All their easements in the Forest of Feckenham, and all freedom of *pannage*.

§ Binton: Besides the two dove houses, the Monks of Bordesley had one carucate of land here—name of donor unknown.

¶ Hilborough: Upon the foundation of Bordesley Abbey, Peter of Studley, a devout man, gave to the Monks of that house ten acres of land lying here, and about the same time did Henry de Montfort grant them fishing in the river of Avon, and free passage with their boat through his floodgates here at Hilborough, but not the fishing of the said floodgates. OBSERVATION: This proves that all the credit of making the Avon navigable is not wholly due to Capt. Andrew Yaranton, as supposed by some. (See Smiles's *English Biography*.) Which are the floodgates mentioned *supra* is not very clear, the land of Hilborough extending between two sets of floodgates, one at Crease Hill, the other at Bidford Grange.

¶¶ Bidford Grange. Their mills here were valued at xxs.—*Dugdale*. Those who used Cistercian mills were exempt from the ban of Excommunication.—West's *Furness*.

** The Manor of Bidford was a royal demesne. Richard I confirmed Maude's gift of it to the Monks of Bordesley, reserving a power to repossess that demesne whensoever he should bestow upon the Monks of Bordesley an estate of equal value. This was never done; for at the time of the Dissolution it was still in their hands.

†† The right of the Monks to hold a Court Leet here was questioned in the 13th year of Edward I, but the Jury, testifying that an Abbot of Bordesley one hundred years antecedent had built houses on the Township and placed Freeholders there, and had also held a Court Leet, the Monks were permitted to enjoy those privileges. About the beginning of King John's reign, there was a dispute between the Monks of Bordesley and the Canons of Kenilworth, about the third part of the tithes of all that the said Monks had in tillage within their Lordship of Bidford, and for all the tithe corn of certain particular grounds there, whereupon, appeal being made to Pope Innocent III, who appointed the Abbots of Bristol, Kingswood, and Kainshaw, to hear and determine the same, it was concluded that the said Monks of Bordesley should thenceforth pay to the Canons of Kenilworth, in lieu of all the tithes due from them to the Church of Bidford, thirty-seven shillings yearly, within the Octave

the Monks of Bordesley. Touching the Abbey of Merevale, we read in *Dugdale* that Robert, Earl Ferrers, having a reverend esteem of the Cistercian Monks, which in his time began to multiply in England, made choice of a mountainous and woody desert near Atherstone (as fittest for solitude and devotion), to found therein a Monastery of that Order, which was begun accordingly in the thirteenth year of King Stephen's reign, and being propagated with Monks from Bordesley Abbey, in Worcestershire, had, by reason of its situation, the name of Mira-valle. Touching Stoneley, or Stoneleigh, we find that before the Monks of that Abbey were translated thither from Radmore, in Staffordshire, they also sent to Bordesley requesting Abbot Haymo to send two of his Monks to instruct them in the Cistercian rule.* This being done, there arose a great friendship between the Monks of these two Abbeys, the Monks of Bordesley always giving courteous entertainment to those of Radmore, whenever they called at Bordesley Abbey on their way to their Grange at Radway near Edge-hill: and after the establishment at Radmore had been transferred to Stoneleigh, so great was the intercourse between the two Abbeys, that a large tract of ground lying between them was called Monkspath, from the constant passing to and fro of the Monks across it.

Kings had been the nursing fathers of Bordesley Abbey. Its Monks could boast of no ordinary list of Royal Charters, and Deeds of Gift. A lady, claiming to be Empress of the Romans and Sovereign of the English, had founded their house. Her son, Henry II, had considered himself the especial guardian of it:

Charter of Henry ii.

HENRY, *King of England, Duke of Normandy and of Aquitaine, to the Justiciaries, Viscounts, and Thanes of England, greeting:*

Know ye, that the Abbey of Bordesley, with all its appurtenances, is in our hand and keeping, wherefore I will, and firmly command, that all their possessions and affairs may be *in bono et in pace*, neither may the Monks of the aforesaid Abbey be impleaded touching any of their tenures except before ourself.

Witnessed by Thomas (a Becket), our Chancellor, at Northampton.

of St. Michael. The said Monks further promising that if at any time the Monastery of Bordesley should receive tithes within the parish of Bidford, that they should, without contradiction, pay the tenth sheaf of corn to the Church of Bidford. A similar dispute took place between the Monks of Bordesley and the Canons of St. Mary of Warwick, about the retention of all tithes of Bidford; this was decided by the Monks of Bordesley promising to pay yearly to Nicholas, Canon of Worcester, the sum of twenty shillings.

* One of these, Friar Roger, afterwards became Abbot of Stoneleigh.

This was no idle promise of patronage on the part of King Henry, for he seems in all things to have looked after the interests of Bordesley Abbey, directing his Bailiffs at Feckenham to see that the Monks of Bordesley had their just liberties in the royal forest there, confirming the gift of Robert de Stafford, of one hide of land in* Bearley to them for ever, and commanding all persons to restore any of their serfs who may have fled from their lands.

The foregoing Charters were also confirmed by Richard Cœur-de-Lion.

The Charter of Richard Cœur-de-Lion.

RICHARD I, *by the Grace of God, King of England, Duke of Normandy and Aquitaine, Count of Andegaviæ, to all Archbishops and Others, greeting :*

Know ye, that we have for our own safety, and that of Alianor, our Queen Mother, and for the soul of King Henry our Father, and for the souls of all our ancestors and successors, granted and confirmed by this present Charter, to God and the Abbey of St. Marie of Bordesley, and the Cistercian Monks there serving God, in pure and perpetual charity, all reasonable gifts which have been made to them or which may reasonably belong to them : to wit, the gift of Maude the Empress, and of King Henry our Father, of all the land of Bordesley, and of Teneshall, and of Tardebigge, with all their appurtenances, and the right of advowson and rule over the Church of the village of Tardebigge, and all the land of Holloway, with its appurtenances, together with the assarts [*i.e.* ground cleared of trees by plucking them up by the roots], joined to that land, which are of the see of the Bishop of Worcester, except the land of the Park, and all their easements in the Forest of Fecham [Feckenham], with all freedom of pannage [hog-feed] and pasture, and wood, and material for building their houses, and other things necessary for their use ; and in the same Forest, one porcharium at Feckenham, with half a virgate of land, and the whole lordship of Bidford, with two mills, and with all other appurtenances of theirs until, touching the Lordship of Bidford, *we give them an exchange of equal value*, and all the lordship of Norton, with the land of the foresters and bedelts, and of Goderich of Hunnesfield, and with all belonging to them, and the new well at Wych for their proper use, without the sale they make therefrom, and one fish pond at Erneley with the land belonging to it. Moreover, we grant and confirm all gifts which have reasonably been made to them, as the Charters or handwritings of the givers may testify—to wit :

The gift of Simon, Bishop of Worcester, of a certain piece of land at Wych, near Choleville, which was a certain island in which the aforesaid Monks of their own labour have a well, and certain assartments near the land of Holloway, which they themselves have cleared.

The gift of Randulf, Earl of Chester, of all the land of Combe, with its appurtenances.

The gift of Roger, Earl of Warwick, of all the land of Sudhanger [Songar], and one hide of land at Octeselum [Oxhill], which belonged to R. Fitz Gregory, with all its appurtenances.

* In Domesday Book this is said to comprehend the whole of Bearley (value ten shillings). William de Burlei (or Bearley), his grandson, William de Burlei, and Hugh de Burlei, were benefactors to the House of Bordesley. Some of the land they gave was in Claverdon and some in Snitterfield parish.

The gift of William and Stephen de Bellocampo, of Osmareley [Bordesley Park], and all its appurtenances.

The gift of Peter of Studley, of ten acres of land, at Hildebergewortha [*Haunted Hilborough.*]

The gift of Nicholas Fitz-Bernard, of twelve acres of land near the Porcharium, at Feckenham.

The gift of Ederic Estrece, of one virgate of land.

The gift of Richard, Bishop of Coventry, of one messuage in Lichesfied [Lichfield?], and the land of Roger of Harland, and the land of William of Balance, and of Hubert Pulot, and one virgate of land of Gaufridus Peche.

The gift of William, Earl of Warwick, of the right of advowson and rule over the Church of Claverdon, and the land they hold of William of Burley.

The gift of Robert of Stafford, of one hide of land in Burley, twelve acres in Tysoe, and two acres of meadow and pasture, which is called Drehei.

The gift of Roger of Sanford, of the mill of Lea, and the land which Walter Cumin gave them near Sudhangar [Songar?], and in Warwick two messuages, the gift of William, Earl of Warwick.

The gift of Hugo de Blaes, of eight acres of land and two of meadow.

The gift of Ralf Fitz-Hugh, of a grove, near Sudhangar.

Wherefore we will and firmly command, &c.

WITNESSES: Hugh, Bishop of Durham,
 G., Bishop of Winchester,
 H., Bishop of Coventry,
 R., Bishop of London,
 Herbert, Archbishop of Canterbury,
 William, the Archdeacon,
 William Manduit, Chamberlain of our Lord the King,
 John, Lord Marshall,
 Robert of Whitefield.

Given under the hand of William, our Chancellor, at Westminster, in the first year of our reign.

We have no mention of King John as a benefactor to this Abbey. He, indeed, was at variance with religious houses all his life, and aimed rather at plundering them than enriching them:

KING JOHN:—Cousin, away for England; haste before:
 And, ere our coming, see thou shake the bags
 Of hoarding Abbots; angels imprisoned
 Set thou at liberty: the fat ribs of peace
 Must by the hungry now be fed upon:
 Use our commission in its utmost force.*

His Son, Henry III, however, extended his favour to the Monks of Bordesley, and they were again confirmed in their possessions by the Charters of Edward I, II, and III.

* Shakspeare.

Edward III also issued the following Letters Patent in favour of the Abbot and Convent of Bordesley:

EDWARD, D.G., *King of England, Lord of Ireland and Duke of Aquitaine, to all to whom these presents shall come, peace:*

Know ye, that since our beloved in Christ, the Abbot and Convent of Bordesley, held by the Charters of our Ancestors, formerly kings of England, which we have confirmed, all the lands and their tenements given to the said Abbey by our ancestors themselves, in free, pure, and perpetual charity, as by the aforesaid Charters and Confirmations shown in our Chancery is fully manifest, and by an inquisition made at our command and returned into our Chancery, by our trusty and well-beloved John de Peyto, sen., John de Heyford, and John de Middlemore, it has been ascertained, that neither the aforesaid Abbot and Convent, nor their predecessors, the Abbots and Convent of that place, have granted any maintenance to anyone, whether demanded by our aforesaid ancestors' mandate or our own. Neither have they been burdened with any maintenances to be found for any person or persons by the foundations of the aforesaid Abbey, save only that the aforesaid Abbot and Convent, at the request of Edward, lately king of England, our Father, at the suit of Master Robert de Baldock, and Hugh le Dispenser, jun., of their own free will have granted certain maintenances to Richard Cleobury, Robert de la Chapelle, and Walter de la Heythe. . . . And because account of exactions and burdens daily falling upon them, and especially on account of the burden of maintenances of this kind the chantries of iv Monks are withdrawn. We, having consideration to the foregoing, and wishing that the chantries of this kind, which are for the souls of our ancestors and our heirs should be upheld have granted, for us, and for our heirs to the said Abbot and Convent, and their successors, that they may be in no wise bound, except by their own free will to find, or grant any maintenances whatever, &c.

In witness of which thing, we have caused these, our Letters Patent, to be executed.

Newcastle: October 23rd, in the 10th year of our Reign.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ABBEY BUILDINGS.

Gatehouse.

THERE, where the Porter in his lodge secure,
 With open porthose sat and conned his prayers,
 A multitude of old and *female* poor
 Assembled, canvassing their own affairs,
Usage unneighbourly, or household cares.
 Ere long, the Almoner in lifted view,
 Beckoned their way unto the gate-house stairs,
 Their puckered aprons into folds they drew,
 And Almoner therein the victual fragments threw.—*Fosbroke*.



HE Abbey Gate-house faced the west, and stood near the north-east corner of the present old Chapel yard, near the meeting of the road from Feckenham and the road from Hewell Grange and Bromsgrove. The Gate-houses of Abbeys were often at a considerable distance from the Minster. At Hexham, the Gate-house was fifty yards from it, at Bordesley it was still more.* Owing to their being sometimes fortified, or strongly built for the confinement of refractory Monks, the Gate-houses of Abbeys frequently out-lived other parts. Thus, in the account of the perambulation of the bounds of St. Stephen's parish, Bordesley, the Gate-house is the only part of Bordesley Abbey mentioned, probably because it was the only part that remained entire. As late as the twelfth century it was absolutely necessary that the entrances to Monasteries should be well defended; for, so wealthy were some, that neither the sanctity of the altar, nor the superstition of man could save them

* In the open space between the Gate-house of the Cloister Buildings was held the Abbey market or fair.

from being plundered. Peterborough, the Golden Minster, was repeatedly attacked by pirates who *who sailed up to it in ships*.

The Abbey Gate-house had usually three gates. By leaving the outer one open, the advantages of a porch were secured, wherein the traveller had shelter in the winter, or shade in the summer, until the porter had ascertained, by looking through the wicket, or lattice, that he was a true man. And here, too, the neighbouring poor awaited the distribution of the dole. This last was a very important part of monastic economy, for in those days there was no workhouse, and no laws to prevent starvation. The Monasteries fed and lodged the poor, and read the Gospel to them during their stay in the Abbey; the Monks considered themselves as the stewards of the poor, upon whom they expended the gifts of the wealthy and the surplus proceeds of their own labour. When a Monk died, his allowance of food was distributed at the gate of the Abbey for thirty days, that the poor might pray for his soul; and upon the death of the Abbot, his allowance was continued during twelve months. And not only food was given away but raiment also. On account of one of their benefactors, the Monks of Bordesley gave away one hundred pairs of shoes annually, during his life, to wit, at the Feast of St. Michael, twenty-five pairs; on All Saints' Day, twenty-five pairs; on Christmas Day, twenty-five pairs; and on the Day of the Purification of St. Mary, twenty-five pairs; and after his death, says the deed, we shall give away *at our gate* fifty pairs. These shoes had wooden soles, and the upper part leather or felt.

The porter at the Gate-house was, according to monastic regulation, to be a shrewd old man, able to give and to receive an answer; he was to have a cell in the Gate-house, and to have a junior porter with him as a companion. Attached to the Gate-house, or in the upper part of it, was a Chapel, and here all laymen who were at work in the Monastery came to hear Mass; and frequently there was a chamber for a priest attached to the Gate-house. But it is probable that at Bordesley, the Chapel of Saint Stephen served the purpose of the Gate-house Chapel—for a second Chapel so close to it would be altogether unnecessary. In some Monasteries the Manorial Court was held in the room over the gateway.* Persons of distinction were

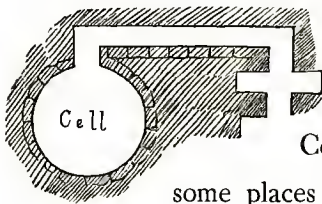
* Rev. E. I. Cutts' *Monks of the Middle Ages*.

received at the Gate-house very honourably: upon the arrival of such a visitor, the great bell was tolled thrice, as a signal for the Monks to robe themselves, and the whole Convent hastened to meet him. So Cardinal Wolsey was received at Leicester Abbey:

At last, with easy roads, he came to Leicester,
Lodged in the Abbey: where the reverend Abbot
With all his Convent honourably received him.—*Shakespeare*: Henry VIII.

And so Edward III was received at Bordesley Abbey, as he was journeying to the Parliament, at Northampton. Ladies too, who visited the Monastery, were also treated with great respect.

In one of the towers of the Gate-house was the Prison for refractory Monks, and others, who had deserved confinement. Some of these monastic prisons remain at Gloucester, at Ewenny, and other places. The Prison at Ewenny Abbey, is a circular



room six feet in diameter, entered by a passage only eighteen inches wide; this is under the tower of the southgate. Sometimes, for misconduct, a Monk was banished to a distant Convent of the same Order; but there seem to have been in some places Penitentiaries for those whose conduct was dangerous or scandalous; one of these, near Salerno, in Italy, was called the Den.

The Stabling.

Passing through the Gate-way of the Abbey, we should have on our left hand the Stabling. This was always near the Gate-house, and spared much trouble to guests, both on their arrival and departure. The Stabling was usually an extensive range of building, and at St. Alban's Monastery had accommodation for three hundred horses.

The Hospitium, or Guest-house.

This building was detached, and stood not far from the Gate-house. It was under the rule of an officer of the Monastery, called the Hosteler. The building was large, and divided into alleys by rows of pillars. If a guest came before dinner, notice was given to the Refectioner, but if he was too late to dine with the Convent he stayed in the Locutorium or Parlour. Howbeit, if any visitor needed food, the Hosteler had to fetch it

according to the rank of the person; and he might also, for the sake of fellowship, drink with the guest if invited to do so. The following legend, taken from the *Annales Cistercienses*, will shew the manner in which visitors were received at Abbeys. One evening there came three strangers and knocked at an Abbey-gate, who, being let in to lodge there for the night, were forthwith taken into the church, as the rule of St. Benedict directs, and, having there made an end of their prayers, were led back to the Hospitium, or Guest-house, and were welcomed in by frere Walter. Then, after their feet had been washed, they were called to the Refectory, or Dining-hall, but scarcely were they sat down to meat when it was discovered that one of the strangers was missing, and his chair empty. Then said the Hosteler: *Where, O friends, is your fellow-traveller? Our fellow-traveller!* said the other two, marvelling at this saying, *thy servants had no fellow-traveller.* Nay, quoth the frere, *say not so, for even now I placed three at table, and he who was between you is gone, and hath left his seat empty.* Nay, in good sooth, said the two strangers, *we tell thee that no third, person did enter with us, neither have we journeyed hither with any man; but being overtaken by the night, we came along to the Abbey-gate; neither have we spoken to any man, save only thyself.* Then frere Walter, doubting, went out and spake to the porter, said: *How many men didst thou let in together about eventide?* And he answered, *Three.* And again frere Walter said unto another monk: *How many men didst thou see enter the Convent together at eventide?* And he answered, *Three.* Howbeit, the strangers still denied that they had had fellowship with any man, and sware by St. Benedict that they spake truly. Then all men marvelled; and they straitly searched the whole Monastery, but they found not him they sought, yet no man had passed out of the gate. Then they were constrained to believe the words of the two men, and hospitably entertained them for the night, and in the morning sent them forth with the wonted benediction. But in the dead of the night following, a vision appeared to frere Walter, as of a man that had the face of an angel, and in a voice, like the sound of sweet music, he said unto him: *Walter, dost thou know me? I am he whom ye sought last night in vain, and whose disappearance so greatly moved the warder. Know, then, that by the goodwill of heaven I am sent to watch over the house, to attend the*

*out-going and in-coming of every holy brother, and to this end am I come to-night, to certify that the alms and oblations of this Brotherhood, and especially of your Abbot, have gone up as a sweet memorial to heaven.**

There was often a little Chapel in the Guest-house where the mass and hours were sung to the guests. After the collation, the Hosteler lighted a lantern, and the guests waited with it before the door of the Chapter-house. They then went into the Refectory to dine, and, after complines, retired to rest in the sleeping chamber over or attached to the Guesten-hall. Visitors were allowed to stay two days and two nights, but on the third day they were to depart. If by any accident a guest could not go on the third day, the Hosteler signified his request to the Abbot or Prior for a longer stay. If in health, he had to attend matins and follow the Convent in everything, unless he had leave to the contrary. When a visitor wished to depart at daybreak, or before that time, the Hosteler took the keys of the chamber from the Prior's bed; but on Sunday, before procession, no one could receive benediction, or the blessing at departure.

In large Monasteries there were more Guest-houses than one, for hospitality was one of the chief duties of a religious house, and at a later time, many Monasteries pleaded the honest fulfilment of this duty as a reason why they should be spared from the havock which the Royal Commissioners were making of the religious houses: Evesham Abbey pleaded it in vain; but Thornton Abbey, owing to its having entertained the spoiler himself, some time before, obtained better terms.

Among the distinguished guests of the Abbot of Bordesley was Edward III. This King was staying here about the time of the Treaty of Northampton, and from here he issued writs for the restoration of the Coronation Stone of Scone to the Scots, but from some cause the writs were never executed.

The Hospitium must at times have presented a strange sight—Guests of every degree would be assembled here, and the noise of many tongues would contrast strangely with the silence of the Cloister, in the alleys of which the Monks were absorbed in study, or were pensively pacing to and fro. In the Hospitium might be seen nobles and ladies, knights and dames, and traders with their wares:

* *Lives of the Saints*, read in the Chapter-house.

Gloves, pinnes, combs, glasses unspotted,
Pomaunders, hooks, and laces unknotted,
Brooches, rings, and all manner of beads,
Laces, round and flat, for women's heads,
Nedles, thred, thimbles, and such other knacks.—*The Four P's.*

Minstrels with their songs and juggling tricks, monks and friars, pardoners with their curious collection of relics, and palmers, with the withered branches of palm, from which they acquired their name, clerks and beggars, all moving about the hall, or crowding round the tables.

The Parlours.

In Cistercian Abbeys, such as Bordesley, there were three Parlours or places where conversation was permitted.* For, though silence was enjoined generally, the framers of the Cistercian rules wisely set apart rooms where the Brethren could hold converse not only with each other, but also with the world. In one of these Parlours the general business of the Convent was carried on. Here the servants of the Monastery assembled to receive their orders, and here, too, the Monks saw their friends, and traded with merchants who exposed their wares or goods here for sale, as the farmer exposed his produce round the market cross of the Abbey. In this Parlour the Chamberlain bought coarse cloth for garments, or bedding for the Dormitory; the Cellarer bought bread, beer, wine, eggs, and hams, for the Monks; and the Hosteler whiter bread, stronger beer, and better wine, for the guests. In the second Parlour conversation only was allowed, and the third was probably for the Religious only. The first Parlour would be connected by a covered passage with the Guest-house and the Refectory.

The Refectory.

This was the Dining-hall of the Abbey. It was an oblong room divided by pillars into two or sometimes three alleys. It was wainscoted on the north and south sides, and above the wainscoting it was painted in tempera. At the east end was a painting of the Crucifixion, to which the Monks, on entering, from washing their hands at the Lavatory, made obeisance. On the other walls were pictures of the Saviour, the Virgin Mary,

* Walcott's *Conventual Arrangement*.

and St. John, and the Last Supper, At the west end was a window-like opening communicating with the kitchen, through which the provisions were passed, when cooked, to those whose business it was to receive them and place them on the table.* The doors of the pantry and cellarage were also at the west end, and a stone seat ran between them, for the purpose of placing vessels on till they were wanted. There were also recesses for the grace cup, out of which the Monks drank round the table when grace had been sung; the mazers, of which each Monk had his particular one; and the ewer and basin in which the Prior or Sub-prior washed his hands when he sat at the head of the Monks' table.† At the Abbot's table sat the Guests and Pilgrims, and with these he conversed, whenever he spoke, which was but seldom. At the Monks' tables, the Prior sat as chief, and the Novices, under the supervision of a Monk, called the Master of the Novices, sat at another table, at the east end of the Refectory. Yet they did not all sit down to meals together. The Monks waited first on the Abbot and his Guests, for conventual discipline required that the most honourable should be first served.

Therefore this worthy man, your confessor,
Because he is a man of great honour
Shall have the first fruit, as reason is—
The noble usage of freres, yet it is
That worthy men of them shall be first served;
And, certainly, he hath it well deserved.‡

Afterwards, the Monks sat down at two tables, on each side of the Refectory, and were waited upon by the Novices, who, when the Monks had dined, sat down to their own dinner. The Monks wore super-tunics at the dinner table to protect their clothes. Diet was strictly prescribed; the sick and weakly alone were allowed to eat flesh; fish, eggs, butter-milk, and cheese, were not to be used on common days, but only on special days, when they were distributed as dainties by the Pittancer. Any Abbot who permitted flesh to be eaten by any person within the enclosure, or who gave it to persons

* Though Refectories usually ran from east to west, there is reason to think that at Bordesley it extended from north to south, as at Kirkstall.

† Fosbroke's *British Monasteries*. ‡ Chaucer, *Sompnoure's Tale*.

without (not being poor or sick) had to beg pardon at the next chapter: and if any of the brethren were found eating flesh, he had to fast every Friday on bread and water till the next chapter;* indeed, so strict and conscientious were the Cistercians on this point, that at a time when, owing to the violence of the wars, little but animal food could be obtained, many died from want, and none would undertake the office of Cellarer, because he would not buy unlawful food.

Only the guests and the sick were allowed to eat white bread; the Monks, too, were forbidden the use of pepper and spices, but they might, if they pleased, eat the common herbs of the country.

Fires were allowed in the Refectory from All-Hallows Day to Good Friday, and the wood was to be found by the Cellarer.

In the recess of a window to the south of the Prior's table, stood an iron desk, on which lay a Latin book, or some religious book, and from this, one of the novices read to the company during dinner.†

And the Reader droned from the pulpit,
Like the murmur of many bees,
The legend of good St. Guthlac,‡
And St. Basil's homilies.—*Longfellow.*

But at times, when the lax rule of an Abbot permitted or connived at it, the law of silence was broken, and the Monks, paying no heed to the Reader, eagerly acquired of the guest the latest news, and would ask continually about the wars in Flanders or Spain, so that an old writer|| said, a man would first hear news of a battle in the Cloister or the Quire, for even the Minster was not free from this talk of worldly affairs: and we find laws passed prohibiting the making of bargains in church, except during the time of fairs. There was also the same laxity as regards the reading of the Bible; and books which conventual rules allowed to be read in the north alley of the Cloister only, were read from the desk in the Refectory, to the delight of many Monks and guests, who preferred the *Metamorphoses of Ovid*, or the *Golden Ass of*

* Steven's *Monasteries*. † Fosbroke.

‡ The *Life of St. Guthlac* was one of the books bequeathed to Bordesley Abbey, by Guy de Beauchamp.

|| Quoted by Fosbroke.

Apuleius, to the *Gospel of St. John*, or even to that of *St. Nicodemus* or *St. Mary*. In the same manner, too, *Cain's Omelies*,* and other works were read in convents; and there are yet extant letters from Abbots, complaining of such readings.

There are some buildings so closely connected with the Refectory, both in situation and use, that it seems proper here to describe them—the first is the Kitchen:

The Kitchen.

This building, as well as the Refectory, was invariably on that side of the Cloister most distant from the Minster.† It was large, being provided with several fire-grates and ovens, and also furnaces for boiling: near the fireplaces were turning gibbets for suspending cauldrons over the fire; and there were also bellows and bellows-blowers. The tongs were of the same kind as the modern tongs, but the poker was forked at the end, whence its name of fire-fork.‡ Before the fireplaces were irons, having holes in them for many spits to turn in at the same time, and the spits are mentioned as being turned by a jack with wheels. Probably before the invention of this machine the spits were all set in motion by a wheel turned by hand, rather than by the toils of the turn-spit-dog, whose movements in this early treadmill were often hastened by the introduction of a shovelful of hot coals into the wheel. Assuredly the smoke-jack would not be used, for chimneys were unknown till the latter days of monachism, the smoke from the fires escaping through the holes in the upper part of the kitchen, which could be opened or closed, with wooden shutters, according to the direction of the wind.

The tables in the Kitchen were massive and slightly hollowed out, so as to serve for kneading-troughs; and the chopping-blocks are spoken of as being very large. The Monks, too, knew the necessity there was for tinning copper and brazen vessels, for these are described as being tinned as at the present day.

The cooks were answerable to the Abbot for loss of, or damage done to, the kitchen furniture, and these cooks were superintended by an officer called the Hebdomadarius, from his being elected for seven days, each Monk being Hebdomadarius in his turn.||

* Wycliffe's Writings. † Walcott's *Monastic Arrangements*. ‡ Fosbroke.

|| Walford's *Conventual Arrangement*.

There was also an officer called the Kitchener, who had charge of the Fish-ponds and the Buttery.

The Host was made with great care; the grains of wheat were selected one by one; they were bruised in a mortar kept for that purpose only; the dough, made of the flour, was kneaded upon a clean table; strict silence was observed during these operations, and also while it was baking. Those who prepared it might not speak, but if they wanted anything were to make signs for it.*

The Monastic Rules required that the Kitchen should be swept with brooms after Vespers on Saturday.



The Abbot's Kitchen, Glastonbury.

The most remarkable example of a Monastic Kitchen is considered to be the one at Glastonbury, known as the Abbot's Kitchen; it is a rectangular building, having a lantern of open stone-work on the top of its conical roof, through which the smoke from the fires and the steam from the cooking escaped.

The Cellarage.

The Cellarage was a very important part of the Monastic establishment. It was a large range of building standing usually on the west side of the Cloister,† but detached from it in order to gain light and ventilation on both sides, if required. As Abbeys daily exercised the duties of charity and hospitality, they would necessarily require large cellarages, and hence these buildings often received such an amount of attention to their construction, as resulted in their being frequently marvels of architecture.

The Monks of many foreign Convents take great pride in showing their Cellars.‡ Indeed, the extent of their Cellars has contributed in no small degree to fix upon the Monks the slur of being gluttons and wine-bibbers.

* Fosbroke. † Walcott's *Conventual Arrangement*. ‡ See Curzon's *Monasteries of the Levant*.

The vulgar idea of a Monk was built up by ill-will, upon a foundation of fact.
Chaucer's Monk

— was not pale as a forpined ghost,
A fat swan loved he best of any rost.

The satires upon gluttonous and wine-bibbing ecclesiastics abound in the rhyming Latin of the middle ages :

O Monachi,	Vos estis,
Vestri stomachi,	Deus est testis,
Sunt Amphora Bacchi.	Turpissima pestis.

The Carnival Song of Constance is another example :

Edit nonna, edit clerus,	Et pro Rege, et pro Papa,
Ad edendum nemo serus,	Bibunt omnes sine aqua,
Bibit ille, bibit illa,	Et pro Papa, et pro Rege,
Bibit servus cum ancilla ;	Bibunt omnes sine lege,
Bibit Abbas cum Priore,	Bibunt primo et secundo,
Bibit coquus cum factore,	Donec nihil sit in fundo.

One of our earliest English satires describes a Monastery with walls built of rich pasties and roofed with cakes, and having pinnacles made of puddings. The poets of the Elizabethan age treated Monks more respectfully, and in this respect they stand almost alone. One of our modern poets, who perhaps understood Monks and Monastic economy better than any man of his time, has almost uniformly made his churchmen epicures :

Then, though a Bishop built this fort,
Few holy brethren here resort ;
Even our good Chaplain, as I ween,
Since our last siege I have not seen.
The Mass he might not sing or say,
Upon *one stinted meal a day*.
So, safe he sat in Durham aisle,
And prayed for our success the while.
Our Norham Vicar, woe betide,
Is *all too well in case* to ride.
The Priest of Shoreswood—he could rein
The wildest war-horse in your train,

But then, no spearman in the hall
Will sooner swear, or stab, or brawl.
Friar John of Tillmouth were the man;
A blithesome Brother at the can,
A welcome guest in hall and bower,
He knows each castle, town, and tower,
In which the wine and ale are good,
'Twixt Newcastle and Holyrood.*

Friar Tuck is a traditional if not an historical personage; and, therefore, none can find fault with Sir W. Scott's delineation of the Holy Clerk of Copmanhurst; but the Abbot of St. Mary's, the Prior of Jorvaulx, and others, are wholly imaginary, and might have been drawn more intellectual had the author chosen to represent the higher Monastic characters.

Longfellow is scarcely more merciful:

SCENE—*Cellar of the Convent of Hirschau.*

Friar CLAUS comes in with a light and a basket of flagons.

Friar CLAUS :—I always enter this sacred place,
With a thoughtful, solemn, and reverent pace.
Pausing long enough on each stair
To breathe an ejaculatory prayer,
And a benediction on the vines
That produce these different sorts of wines.†

Again, out of *King Witlaf's Drinking Horn*, the Monks of Croyland

— drank to the Saints and Martyrs
Of the dismal days of yore,
And as soon as the Horn was empty,
They remembered one Saint more.‡

At Bordesley, the Cellarage doubtless stood to the south-west of the Cloister, where a deep hollow in the Abbey Meadows still marks its place.

It was necessary, too, that every attention should be given to the keeping of provisions, for Monasteries seem to have been the chief dependance of the poor and working classes in times of war and famine. Every Monastery furnished a market to the farmer,

* Sir W. Scott: *Marmion*.

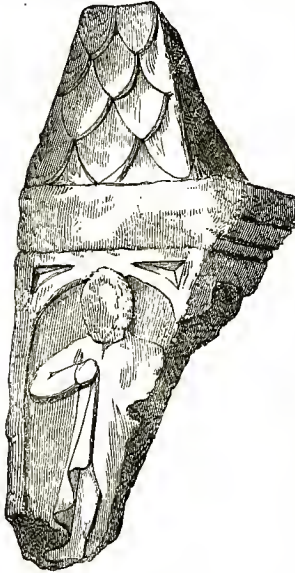
† *Golden Legend*.

‡ Longfellow.

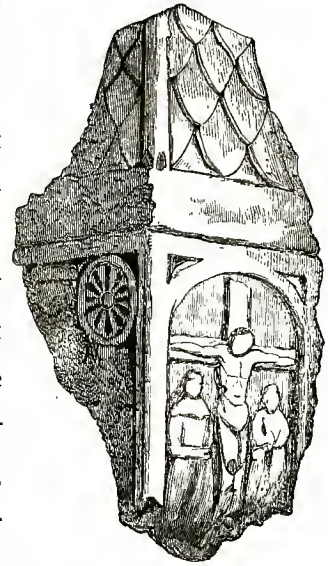
and its cellarage was a storehouse, from which, in time of dearth; even the rich were glad to buy food. But this was found to be injurious to the interests of the poor, and a perversion of one of the objects of religious houses, and in 1272 an act of parliament gave the Monks power to refuse to sell the provisions in their storehouses.*

The Exchequer.

Near to the Cellarer's office was the Exchequer, where the accounts of the Monastery were paid; it received its name from the cloth divided into squares or chequers, for the readier casting-up of accounts.† In the open space between the Gate-house and the west front of the Minster the market of Bordesley Abbey would be held, and the Exchequer no doubt looked upon the market place, in the centre of which usually stood a market cross. The head of a cross, of a kind not generally used for monumental purposes, and which *may* therefore have been the Market Cross of Bordesley Abbey, is in the possession of Mr. Charles Swann, of Redditch. On the front is a representation of the Crucifixion; on



one side is a figure of St. Catharine, bearing her usual attribute, a wheel; and on the other a figure, perhaps intended for St. Roche as the garment is raised, and St. Roche is usually represented as shewing a boil on his thigh. The back of the Cross is unfortunately broken off, so that we cannot tell what its subject was, but the Burial of the Saviour was one frequently chosen for the reverse of the Crucifixion. This, however, *may have* stood in the Cloister garth, or in some other part of the



monastic enclosure where crosses were usually placed. We now turn to the buildings on the eastern side of the large Cloister.

* Knight's *Capital and Labour*.

† Walcott's *Conventual Arrangement*.

The Abbot's Lodging.

Leaving the Refectory by the door leading into the Cloister, we should have on our right the Abbot's Lodging.* As its name implies, it was the Lodging of the Abbot, who had rooms separate from the other Monks; in the early times of the Cistercian Order, the Abbot slept in the midst of his Monks in the large Dormitory, but, in the later times, when its poverty and simplicity existed no longer, the Abbot had large and stately rooms to himself in some convenient part of the Abbey enclosure, and oftentimes, a country house at some distance. The Abbot's rooms, in early times, communicated with the Monks' Dormitory, so that he could at any time enter it if he had reason to think that his presence was required.

The Calefactory.

The Calefactory, where water was warmed, or ice thawed, for the use of the Monks in winter,† was near to the Abbot's Lodging, and under the Monks' Dormitory. Here fire was procured for the censers.

The Dormitory.

The Dormitory was at first one large room, in which, in early times, the twelve Monks slept with their Abbot in the midst of them, for Convents then consisted of this number of Monks and an Abbot, in imitation of the twelve Disciples and their Master.‡ And Chaucer says:

For xiii is a Convent as I guesse.

But from various circumstances, as the founding of Chantries, etc., the number of Monks became almost unlimited, and we have some very marvellous stories about the length of Monastic processions, etc., in the chronicles of some Abbeys.

The Dormitory was in later times divided into cells, one for each Monk, and this departure from primitive simplicity was compounded for, by making the doors of the cells of three parts lattice-work, so that the Abbot could at any time, by looking

* Walcott's *Conventual Arrangement*.

† Walcott's *Conventual Arrangement*.

‡ Duodenos Monachos adjuncto Patre disponebat.—*Mon. Ang. Art. Cisterc.*

through this latticing, see what the Monk was doing in his cell.* Each cell was furnished with a mat, a blanket, a coverlet, and a pillow which was on no account to exceed one foot and a half in length.† The Chamberlain had charge of the beds, which were made by the Monks themselves, daily, after Matins. The Dormitory communicated with the Church by a passage over the Chapter-house, which was a great convenience to the Monks who had to sing Nocturns. The Prior or Sub-Prior usually slept in the Dormitory, with a light burning near him. The Monks slept in the same habits which they wore during the day. The ordinary custom of the time was to sleep without night clothes of any kind, this is apparent from many illustrated MSS. The Dormitory was always an upper room, and was often built over the Refectory. Besides the Monks' Dormitory, there were others attached to the Guesten-hall, the Infirmary, etc.

The Chapter-house.

This building was so called because in it the Rubrics of the Statutes of the order were daily read over to the Monks. The Chapter-houses of the secular clergy were polygonal, those of the regulars always rectangular. The Cistercians being regulars had rectangular Chapter-houses, and these they often divided into three alleys by rows of pillars: a stone seat ran along the walls, and at the east end was a raised seat for the Abbot. The Chapter-house was the parliament and court of justice of the Abbey, and the place where the ceremony of admission into the brotherhood was performed.‡ In sacredness it yielded to the Minster only, and, therefore, not unfrequently a perpetual light burned in it. In the Chapter-house privileges were conferred upon benefactors. Here the Monks of Bordesley gave to Guy, Earl of Warwick, *The Black Dog of Arden*, the power to present two Monks, in their Convent, to sing mass for the health of his soul, and for the souls of his ancestors.|| And to others, in exchange for land and woods, they gave permission to be esteemed Cistercian Monks, *tam in vita quam in morte*, and allowed them to be buried in the cowl of the Order; and here, too, in all probability were executed most

* Walcott. † Hutchinson, quoted in *Castles and Abbeys of England*.

‡ Morton's *Monastic Annals*. || See Dugdale.

of the numerous deeds between the Abbot and Convent of Bordesley, and others, which still exist in the Public Record Office. A strange scene occurred daily in the Chapter-house. After Prime, the Monks and Novices walked in solemn procession from the Minster into the Chapter-house. There the Monks, having bowed to the Abbot, seated themselves on the seats round the walls, while the Novices sat at their feet. After the martyrology and some other parts of the service had been said, there followed a portion of the rule of St. Benedict, with a commemoration of the faithful departed, followed sometimes by a sermon. When the rule had been explained, each brother who had in the slightest degree transgressed it, came forward, and confessed it aloud, before all the Convent. He rose from his seat, threw back the hood of his cowl that all might see his face, and threw himself down on the ground without speaking a word, until the Abbot asked him: *What sayest thou? Mea culpa:* said the prostrate Monk. Then the Abbot bade him rise in the name of the Lord, and after confessing his sin, and receiving a penance, if it were necessary, he went back to his seat at the bidding of the Abbot.

When each had thus confessed his own sin, he had to declare whatsoever he had seen amiss in his brother, rising up and saying: *Our dear brother Nicholas has committed such a fault.* Then the accused, lest he should be angry with his accuser, was wont to say for him a *Pater-noster* and an *Ave-Maria*. After each one had thus sat upon the stool of repentance, there was a second commemoration of the faithful dead, after which, all left the Chapter-house in procession.

It was necessary that the candidate for admission should be over fifteen years old, before he entered on his noviciate or twelve months' probation. Prostrating himself in the Chapter-house, he was asked by the Abbot what he wanted. Then when he had declared his desire to be made a brother, the Abbot said: *Is it your will and do you heartily desire to be made a partaker of all masses and prayers, and alms-deeds done in this holy place, or to be done hereafter?* Postulant, *Yes.* Then the Abbot continued: *Is it your will also to defend and maintain the rights of this holy place, whereby God and St. Andrew may be the more peaceably served, by your word and goodwill as a true brother ought to do?* Postulant: *Yes.*

Then the Abbot, or Prior, turning to the brethren, said: *Here, my brethren, is*

. . . . who of his clean devotion which he hath toward God, and of a special desire to us, asketh for God's sake, to be admitted and received into our brotherhood, that he may have his part in the spiritual blessings and prayers, which, through the gifts and grace of God, are done among us. Is it your will to receive him? The Monks: Yes. Then the Abbot or Prior taking the Postulant by the hand said: *We take you into our brotherhood, granting you to be partaken in all matins, masses, evensongs, prayers,*



A Monk Reading in the Chapter-house.

fastings, abstinences, watchings, alms, and good deeds, the which to the praising of God be done among us and all ours. Then the new brother kissed all the brethren, and after the twelve months' probation had been satisfactorily fulfilled, the Novice, after another ceremony in the Chapter-house, was admitted as a Monk; if, however, he left the Monastery, he could not be re-admitted after the third time.

The Sacristy.

Leaving the Chapter-house, and continuing along the east alley of the Cloister, we come to the Sacristy, the room in which the sacred vessels and vestments were kept. These, so costly and ornamental in other Monasteries, were, in Cistercian houses like Bordesley Abbey, inexpensive and simple. The altar cloth, the alb, and the service, were of plain linen. The stole and the maniple were at first of cloth, but were afterwards allowed to be of silk. The crosses were to be of wood painted, and it was forbidden to have them of carved-work, of gold, or silver. The cruets for the service of the altar were not to be of silver or gold, though the chalice and fistula might be of silver gilt. The candlesticks might be of iron, and the censers of iron or copper. As for capes, palls, dalmatics, and tunics, they were strictly forbidden.*

The Libraries.

There were in Cistercian houses two Libraries. The Little Library, next to the Sacristy, for the service books; and the Great Library, over the Little Library and Sacristy, for all other books. The way from the Sacristy to the south transept of the Minster was through the Little Library.

The Lavatory.

The Lavatory was usually in the Cloister, and in all cases near to the Refectory, so that those who had washed could readily pass from it into the Dining-room of the Abbey.† The most usual form of the Lavatory was that of a long trough of stone, through which the water ran, escaping gradually through small holes in the side. This enabled a great number to wash at a time, and seems much better than the round or octagonal basin used in some Monasteries. Lavatories of the former kind remain in the Cloisters of Worcester, Gloucester, and other Cathedrals, and the base of an octagonal fountain or Lavatory may be seen at Durham. Near the Lavatory was a recess in which the towels hung.

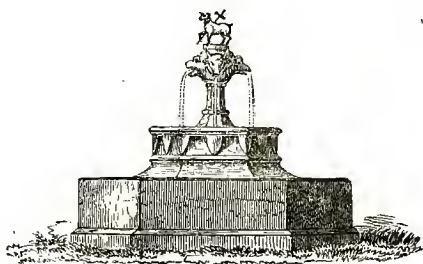
The Lavatory was supplied with water from the spring in the garth, which was

* *Castles and Abbeys of England.*

† *Walcott's Conventual Arrangement.*

without doubt the primitive place of washing, and from this spring water was drawn for the use of the Kitchen and for the Calefactory. In romances we read of fountains with basins made of wrought latten or bronze, or of stone curiously carved. In Byron's poetical description of Newstead Abbey, a fountain of this latter kind is described :

Amidst the court a Gothic fountain played,
Symmetrical, but decked with carvings quaint,
Strange faces like to men in masquerade,
And here, perhaps, a *devil*, there, a saint :
The spring gushed through grim mouths of granite made,
And sparkled into basins, where it spent
Its little torrent in a thousand bubbles,
Like man's vain glory, and his vainer troubles.



Restoration of a Mediæval Fountain at Durham.

CHAPTER V.

We do grant to the aforesaid Andrew Wyndesore, Knight, Lord Wyndesore, all the house and scite of the late Monastery of Bordesley in our Co: of Worc: now dissolved, and all and singular the houses, edifices, mills, dove-houses, gardens, orchards, garden-grounds, ponds, vivaries, lands, and grounds, within the scite, circuit, and precinct of the said late Monastery.—*Deed of Gift of Henry VIII to Lora Windsor.*



HAVING described the principal Cloister buildings of the Abbey, I will now speak of those buildings which were not immediately connected with the Cloister: such were the Infirmary, the Noviciate, the School, the Lazar-house, the Sutrinum, the Bovaria and Vaccaria, the Industrial Buildings, Barns, etc.

The Infirmary.

The Infirmary was the Hospital not only of the Convent but of the neighbourhood. This was the only place where the Monk, worn out with labour and fasting, or smitten with disease, could have those comforts which health, indeed, likes, but sickness demands; or where the traveller, taken ill perhaps on a long journey, could receive the benefit of medical knowledge or skill. Doctors of physic might, indeed, be found in large towns, who considered the stars to be the causes of all diseases, and who studied astrology as perversely as the doctors of Salern did dialectics. Such an one is Chaucer's *Doctour of Phisike*, who was well grounded in astronomy and natural magic, and knew well whether the stars were in favourable or malign conjunction for his patient's disease; ignorant of the Bible, and playing into the hands of the apothecary; well skilled in the fabulous virtues of stones and metals, and loving gold above all other, because it was a *cordial*. The palace had its *Dr. Alasco*, the little town its *Dr. Pinch*, and the village its *Wise Woman*; but the Monastery had its *Friar Laurence*, and the Nunnery its *Abbess Emilia*.

To the Monastery, therefore, the writers of ballads and romances bring their wounded heroes: here the knight, overcome, for want of clean confession, in warring against the evil custom of some *Castle of Maidens*, is healed of his wounds, and strengthened by prayer for new adventures. But though we may hence imagine medicine and surgery to have been generally practised in the Cloister from purer motives than elsewhere, there are yet exceptions enough to prove the rule. To Kirkley Nunnery, in an evil hour, Robin Hood* went to be recovered of his sickness, and there he was bled to death by his kinswoman, the Prioress, whom for this deed, the Norman clergy held to be blessed above all women in the Cloister. And at Swinstead Abbey King John was believed to have been poisoned by a Monk, who, having boiled a toad in a pot of ale, gave the drink to the king, saying: *Syr, Drink of ys ale, for it is such ale as ye never before dranke of in all your life.*

The Infirmary would necessarily form a very important part of a Monastic establishment, for an Hospital is peculiarly a Christian institution. The first Hospitals for the sick were founded in the fourth century, and Julian the Apostate ascribes no small part of the success of Christianity to the kindness with which all ranks and conditions of men were treated at a time when the mind is especially alive to kindness, and remembers with gratitude little acts, which, in time of health, would be requited with mere expressions of thanks. We cannot wonder, then, that every Monastery should have an Infirmary, not only for the Monks themselves, but for all who needed it; and, doubtless, some who were borne wounded from the battle-field of Evesham, or elsewhere, were received by the Monks of Bordesley, and healed in their Infirmary—

With wholesome syrups, drugs, and holy prayers,†

or a strange *materia medica* learned from books similar to the one on Physic and Surgery given to their Abbey by Guy de Beauchamp.

As regards the position of the Infirmary, it stood, together with the Noviciate, a short distance eastward of the Great Cloister.‡ In the Abbey Meadows are evident traces of buildings in this situation; these were doubtless the Infirmary and Noviciate,

* Ballad of Robin Hood. † Shakspeare: *Comedy of Errors*. ‡ Walcott's *Monastic Arrangement*.

with the little Chapel usually attached to them. In connection with the Infirmary were the Surgery, Dispensary, and Herbary. In the Minster, a place was set apart under the central tower for those who were well enough to attend the service of the Church, but were not well enough to leave the Infirmary altogether.*

The Lazar-house stood apart from all other buildings, and was intended for those afflicted with leprosy, a disease supposed to have been brought into this country by crusaders and pilgrims.

Noviciate.

This building was attached to the Infirmary, and here the Novices were instructed in all the duties of the Order into which they sought to be admitted. They attended service in the Minster, entering by a separate door, and occupying seats below those of the Monks, at whose feet they thus appeared to sit.† They had a separate table in the Refectory, and after they had waited on the Monks, sat down to dinner thereat, under the supervision of the Master of the Novices.‡

The School.

The School was attached to the Noviciate, and no doubt was at first established to instruct the Novices in the Latin Services of the Church. Few, probably, besides the Novices, found admission into these Schools, and these were doubtless well satisfied if, when they left, they could write their names and cast up simple accounts. But in this little learning the peasant had no share; he was, indeed, taught the doctrines of the Church, Scripture events were told him from the Pulpit, and its scenes painted for him on the walls of the Church; but, to him learning was sometimes associated with injustice, and he believed that his fellow, arraigned for a crime, and not able to claim the *benefit of clergy*, was hanged because he could not read. We cannot therefore wonder that he should consider a noun and verb to be abominable words which no Christian ear could endure to hear.|| A boy, indeed, might profit by

* *History of the Cistercian Order.* † *History of the Cistercian Order.* ‡ Fosbroke.

|| See Shakspeare: *King Henry VI*, Second Part.

admission to the Convent School, but the grown-up peasant, if received as a Novice, probably never learned more Latin than *Wamba's* pass-word—*Pax vobiscum*, or *Friar Bungy's* oracular—*Manus malorum suos bonos breaket*.

The Monastic School discipline was very strict. The Novices were required to commit the whole Psalter to memory. Great pains were taken with the boys who sang in the Quire, and they were severely punished if they failed in their notes, or by any means spoiled the harmony. Before grand services they were required to fast from all food but beans, which were believed to improve their voices.* Gregory used to stand over the boys in the Music-School with a whip, teaching his pupils as Gideon taught the men of Succoth.

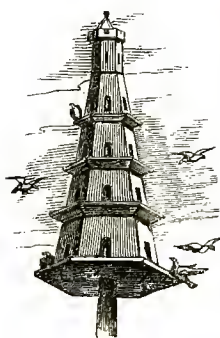
The Sutrinum

Was for the making and mending of clothes in general, not merely of shoes as the name might seem to imply.

The Bovaria and Vaccaria

Were for oxen and cows respectively; no person could enter the latter without permission from the Kitchener, or the officer appointed by him to take charge of the Vaccaria.

The Dovecote.



The annexed engraving shows the form of the Monastic Dovecote, as described by Fosbroke. Some of the Dovecotes would however be much larger, as we find them set down among the possessions of a Monastery, and often at a considerable distance from it, as in the case of the Dovecotes at Binton, which belonged to the Monks of Bordesley; probably these large Dovecotes were situated at a distance, in order to prevent the doves from damaging the crops near the Abbey.

A Poultry-yard was also attached to a Monastic establishment, and was usually to the north of the Minster.

* Fosbroke.

Gardens and Orchards.

Not the least pleasing features of a Monastic establishment were its Gardens and Orchards, and these would appear doubly beautiful when, as was often the case, the conventual enclosure was surrounded with a savage wilderness or a howling waste. Yet the Monastic Garden was not a thing of beauty only, like flower-gardens of the present day. Curious plants, like the Glastonbury Thorn, or plants that had been brought from a far country, like Eve's-Apple, were no doubt gladly received by the Monastic Gardener; but, with the exception of such as these, his garden produced only those plants and herbs which were useful for food, or deemed efficacious in medicine. The former were plants of the cabbage and the onion tribes, and among the latter, we learn from Chaucer, were laurel, centaury, fumitory hellebore, catapuce, and dogwood.*

The Monks were at a very early period noted for their skill in gardening. In 1107, Brithnod, Abbot of Ely made for his Convent excellent gardens and orchards. The latter, at a distance, looked like a wood loaded with fruit. The gardens at Holborn, which existed in Shakspeare's time were probably first planted by this Abbot:

GLOSTER.—My Lord of Ely, when I was last in Holborn,
I saw good strawberries in your garden there.†

Flower-gardens, though not by any means common, were in existence in Chaucer's time. In the *Knight's Tale*, the *fayre Emilie* is described as walking up and down in the garden, gathering white flowers and red, to make a garland; but they seem to have been unknown in very early times. The Garden of Eden was a garden of fruit-trees. Noah planted a vineyard. Ahab wanted the inheritance of Naboth to make a garden of herbs. Solomon speaks of the apple-tree as chief among the trees of the wood: we read in the Bible of gardens of nuts, of pomegranates, and spices; gardens of cucumbers and of melons; but flowers are generally spoken of as flowers of the field.

The Monastic Garden was protected by a high wall, in some cases fourteen feet high; indeed this seems to have been the case with all gardens belonging

* The Nonnes Preestes Tale.

† Shakspeare's *Richard III.*

to the wealthy, as is evident from the works of various poets. We read in Chaucer, that *January* had a garden walled round with stone; and *Angelo's*, in *Measure for Measure*, was circummured with brick; a garden was more private then than now, and many things were then done in it, which are now done in the house. Our forefathers played chess, read, wrote, and slept in their gardens. *Hamlet's* Father was killed sleeping in his orchard:

GHOST.— ——— Sleeping within mine orchard,
My custom always of the afternoon.*

As in the midst of the gardens of pagan Rome there was wont to be placed a statue of the obscene god Priāpus, so in the midst of the Monastery Garden, as if to shew the triumph of Christianity over Idolatry, there was placed a Cross. The Gardens of Bordesley Abbey most probably lay to the south-east of the Minster, where they could be easily watered from the fish-ponds, and drained into the stream which now flows along the bottom of the Abbey Meadows.

Orchards are frequently mentioned in Monastic charters and records, and traces of old Orchards still remain in the neighbourhood of religious houses, in the form not only of enclosure walls, and prepared fruit-tree borders, but also of venerable pear-trees,† some of them still abundantly fruitful, others in the last stage of decay.

There are persons yet living who can remember some vestiges of the Orchard of Bordesley Abbey, in the shape of a few old pear-trees, on the side of the hill to the north-west of the site of the Abbey buildings, having a south-east aspect; and though apples and pears were the chief fruits of all Monastic orchards, yet they also produced plums, cherries, nnts, etc. There was, without doubt, a greater variety produced in the Orchards of the Worcestershire Convents than in those of other counties, for Worcestershire has always been celebrated for its fruits. Robert of Gloucester, in whose county the vines rivalled those of France, says, in his *Rhyming Chronicle*:

In the County of Canterbury most fish is,
And most chase of wild beasts at Salisbury it is;
At London ships most, and wine at Winchester,
At Hertford sheep and oxen, and fruits at Worcester.

* Shakspeare: *Hamlet*.

† Loudon's *History of Gardening*.

According to the Monastic Rules, the fruits were not to be gathered by any of the Monks, nor even by the Orchardier, or Vineyarder, without the license of the Abbot; and all windfalls, if seen by any Monk, were to be placed by him around the roots of the trees from which they fell. In like manner, no one was allowed to gather herbs in the garden at his pleasure, but had to wait until he had leave from the Abbot, or until they were gathered for the general use of the Brethren.

The Fish-ponds.

The Fish-ponds at Bordesley Abbey lay to the north-east of the conventual buildings. They appear to have been dug out of a level meadow, the earth being thrown out on each side so as to form an embankment of considerable size. The Fish-ponds were thus raised above the level of the neighbouring brook, and had, therefore, to be supplied by a channel brought from some distance up the stream. The embankments of these ponds being between the brook and the Abbey, also served to protect it on that side from inundations. The ponds were long and narrow, and from being raised above the level of the meadows must have had somewhat the appearance of a Dutch canal of the present day; they were under the care of the Kitchener, and being much smaller than the pools in the neighbourhood served as a kind of vivarium. For, although the strict rules of the Cistercians forbade their eating fish themselves, they would require a great supply of it for the guests who were continually presenting themselves at their gates, and the Monks of Bordesley had, therefore, many pools from which they could supply the Fish-ponds near the Abbey; one lay to the west of the Abbey, and the high embankment, which prevented it from flooding its lower buildings, still remains; in addition to the various mill-ponds and the reservoirs in the valley leading up to Alvechurch, they had pools at Feckenham and Hernley.

But besides furnishing a plentiful supply of fish, these pools attracted innumerable flocks of wild fowl, which were snared by the Convent Fowler with his nets, or slain by the Ecclesiastic with his hawks, in spite of the canon law. In Monastic establishments, a prepossession existed in favour of the flesh of birds over that of beasts, for it was held by many that they were not cursed at the Fall. An abundant supply of water-fowl

and feathered game was, therefore, an important item in Monastic economy, and hence, it is probable, that decoys were made on the pools in the neighbourhood of Bordesley Abbey; for hawking, which was followed rather as an amusement than because it furnished one of the necessities of life, could never have supplied a sufficient quantity for the use of the guests.

Wild fowl are still numerous in the valley; herons, which are becoming a *rara avis* in most parts of England, may still be seen here, and on the 18th of November, 1863, no fewer than nine were seen together, near the artificial channel which still supplies Redditch Old Mills.

Mills.

A fall of water was, without doubt, the origin of many an inland town and village, and a water-mill, especially if protected by a neighbouring castle, or if belonging to an abbey near at hand, was often the cause of considerable traffic to and from a place. Guilds, Convents, Colleges, and Hospitals, were wont to buy corn, and send it to a mill, often at some distance, to be ground. The farmer who grew corn, and he who received it as tithe or rent did the same; and since millers in those days, as we learn from poem, ballad, and proverb, were but *indifferently honest*, a decided preference was given to the Abbey Mills, for as they belonged to a religious order, men believed there was a better security for the return of the just quantity of flour, to say nothing of the spiritual advantage which was supposed to be derived from encouraging Conventual Mills, and especially those belonging to Cistercian Abbeys.

To an Abbey, then, the value of a fall of water would be great, and the Monks of Bordesley seem to have availed themselves of this source of revenue to a great extent, for between their Grange at Hewell, and the village of Ipsley, there appears to have been no fewer than five. The remains of the old mill at Hewell may still be seen, and of six other mills which now stand between there and Ipsley, only one is known to be of recent construction, the original wheel of which, set up seventy years ago, by W. Bartleet, Esq., has been lately replaced by a turbine wheel; and of the others, two are mentioned in the account of the Perambulation of the Bounds of St. Stephen's parish, a thing which could not have taken place later than the time of the transition from *Rome* to *Canterbury*. The antiquity of these, therefore, can scarcely be doubted.

Yet at the time the Monks of Bordesley took possession of their lands, there was not thereon a single abrupt fall of water, for such a thing would rarely happen among the low rounded hills in the neighbourhood. But there was a gradual descent of the Arrow from the Lickey, and of the Red Ditch (now known as Pigeon's Brook) from Blackwell, and skilful engineering soon furnished them with the falls of water they required for their Mills.

At this time there stood, half way between their House and the Lickey, the *even then* ancient town of Alvechurch. On a hill, to the west of the town, stood the old Church, and beside it the old yew-tree, still green above the graves of Saxon, Norman, and Englishman; on a lower hill, to the east, was the Bishop's Palace, a low, half-timber building, enclosing a square court, and surrounded by a moat, which was then deemed essential to security, and the mode in which the Bishop contrived to moat the brow of a hill with water was a lesson to the Monks of Bordesley. By cutting channels from a distance up the stream almost any fall of water might be obtained. Near Alvechurch the Monks of Bordesley had a Grange, and having moated it, they cut a channel from here to their chief mill, diverting the stream for a distance of quite two miles. Moreover, not satisfied with one artificial channel only, they made another by diverting the stream which flowed from Blackwell, and turned their mill at Hewell Grange. Both these streams flowed into the pound of the mill, which has always been known as Redditch Old Mill.

The Old Mill was originally a corn-mill (and so, perhaps, were the others, though they are now known as the New and the Old Paper-Mills, the Forge, etc., for a corn-mill would be one of the first necessities of any community), and so it continued until the introduction of the Needle Trade into this neighbourhood, when, for a long time, needles and flour were both produced under one roof; at length, it being found that the mill was not powerful enough for the two trades, in 1854 the more profitable one expelled the more ancient.

In the name of one of the Mills, the Forge, we have (with the exception of great cinders) almost the only relic of a trade once carried on extensively in the neighbourhood of the Abbey. This was the smelting and working of iron, alluded to in a former chapter of this work.

Of the Paper-Mills, the one at Hewell is doubtless the older, for the one at Beoley, mentioned in the account of the Perambulation, is there called the *New Paper-Mill*; both were probably corn-mills at first, and afterwards changed into paper-mills: a most unpopular change, to which Shakspeare alludes in the speech of *Jack Cade* to *Lord Say*:

And contrary to the King, his crown, and dignity, thou hast built a *Paper-Mill*.

Granges.

As some lands belonging to Bordesley Abbey were so far off that they could not be conveniently cultivated by the Lay-brethren, nor the produce be carried at once to the barns of the Monastery, the Monks built farm-houses, called Grangēs, upon these lands. These were provided with barns, granaries, stables, stalls, and all instruments required in husbandry; and these farms were under the management of officers of the Monastery, called Grangers, who directed the hinds in their work and accounted for the produce of the farm to the Abbot.

These Granges were, for obvious reasons, built as near as possible to a fall of water, for the convenience of grinding the corn. Oft-times they were solitary houses, so far removed from the haunts of men, that the word Grange became a synonyme for loneliness and melancholy:

The broken sheds looked sad and strange,
Unlifted was the clinking latch;
Weeded and worn the ancient thatch
Upon the lonely moated Grange.*

And *Brabantio*, when aroused in the night by *Iago* and his companions, exclaims:

What tell'st thou me of robbing? This is Venice.
My house is *not a grange*.†

Yet, though some Granges were solitary as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers—places where refractory brethren could be sent to as a punishment—some were far from being so cheerless and lonely: some were Abbatial residences forming a kind of country house for the Abbot; such was probably the Grange at Hewell, where

* Tennyson.

† Shakspeare: *Othello*.

Lord Windsor went to live in preference to taking up his abode in the Abbot's Lodging at Bordesley, and this, too, when, expelled from Stanwell, he came hither at the most inclement season of the year. His living at Hewell Grange is, therefore, no proof that the Abbey was destroyed immediately upon its surrender, for the Grange was probably more like a Manorial residence than a Monastic one, and therefore a more suitable dwelling for Lord Windsor than the Abbey itself. Moreover, some generations must elapse before a building consecrated to God could be made into a home for man, wherein he could live with an easy conscience. Even if he tenanted those parts only where he had perhaps once been lodged or fed as a pilgrim or a traveller, still the proximity of buildings so sacred as the Minster and Chapter-house, and of places so solemn as the Cemetery and Cloister Garth, must have seemed a constant reproach—a skeleton at his feast—an incubus at his couch. Even the Parlours and Refectories would be fraught with religious associations, and at Christmas-tide few would venture in such places to pluck the berries of the mistletoe. The various scenes which took place at every mansion at that time would have seemed sad and strange in the gloom of a Monastery. The feasting, minstrelsy, and dancing, would be flat and spiritless; and if, by any chance, a homeless Monk came seeking food where he had formerly doled it to the poor dependants of the Abbey, his presence would be felt as a burden by all.

Lord Windsor yielded, then, to a very natural and right feeling in preferring the Grange at Hewell, small as it must have been for a nobleman's mansion, to dwelling in the Abbey of Bordesley. Moreover, a superstition, not yet quite extinct, which traced every evil that happened, or might happen, to the holding of Church property, perhaps had its weight with him. As blessings were pronounced upon him who founded or enriched an Abbey—so on the other hand, curses were laid upon him who should demolish or despoil it.* St. Peter, with the golden key, admitted the former into the heavenly Jerusalem,

* Whosoever shall take from this our gift, or from the gifts of other good men, may the heavenly Gateward take from him in the Kingdom of Heaven: and whosoever will increase it, may the heavenly Gateward increase his state in the Kingdom of Heaven.—*Extract from the Charter of Wulfere, King of Mercia, to the Abbot of Medeshamstede (Peterborough), on the Hallowing of the Monastery there.*

If any one break this in anything, may St. Peter exterminate him with his sword: if any one observe it, may St. Peter, with the Keys of Heaven, undo for him the Kingdom of Heaven.—*Extract from the Letter of Pope Vitalian, confirming the above.*

while, with the sword that he bought with the price of his coat, he cut off the latter from life eternal. At the Dedication of the Minster, the Bishop had set before all men a blessing and a curse :

Accurséd, saith the Prelate then, be he in future years,
Who layeth hands upon this House, the pious Founder rears :
Be he accurséd in the town—accurséd in the field,
Earth give him nevermore her fruit, nor Heaven its blessing yield.

Accurséd be he going out—accurséd coming in ;
Fly him all hope, and let his prayer be turnéd into sin.
Let sentence, at the judgment seat, upon his head alight :
Let Satan stand at his right hand ; and let his day be night.

All ills of earth, all woes of Hell, his head and heart oppress.
And let his wife a widow be, and his children fatherless :
Let them be beggars, seeking alms, but all men say them nay
And in few years his name and place be blotted quite away.*

* Neale.



CHAPTER VI.

THE ORDER OF THE MONKS OF BORDESLEY.

In the time of this King [William Rufus] began the Cistercian Order, which is now both asserted and believed to be the surest way to heaven.



THESE are the words of William of Malmesbury, who thought it meet in his *Chronicle* to mention this Order, because the glory of founding it belonged to an Englishman. Now the founding of it was on this wise: In the days of the Red King there lived at Sherborne a young religious, named Stephen Harding. His Noviciate failed to inspire him with a love for the Monastic life, but gave him a desire for roaming. He wandered restlessly through England, and thence crossed the Cheviots into Scotland. Finding no rest there, he went to France, and for a time studied diligently at the School of Paris. Here he formed a friendship with a fellow-student, and after a while the two agreed to travel together to Rome. To beguile the tediousness of the way, Stephen sang the Psalter daily, as he had been wont to do at Sherborne. By degrees he became smitten with a love for the life he had forsaken, and, on arriving at the magnificent Abbey of Molesmes, in Burgundy, he assumed the tonsure.

Here he discovered that the rule of St. Benedict was departed from:

The reule of St. Maure and of St. Beneit
Because that it was olde and somdele streit,*

was virtually annulled. Stephen pointed out the variations and departures to the Abbot;

* Chaucer.

Chapters were held, and the Abbot, Robert of Molesmes, and eighteen Monks, were convinced. But it was too late to re-model Molesmes:

'Tis hard to settle order once again.*

So, with hearts earnestly set on the work, they removed to Citeaux or Cisteaux not far from Dijon, the capital of Burgundy. Here they built a new house in a valley, so savage and bitter to the souls of men, that it was called the Valley of Wormwood. Here for a while they lived, but though the Abbot's spirit was willing, his flesh was weak; he was weary of the table spread in the desert, and longed after the flesh-pots of Molesmes. Ten of the Monks followed the backsliding Abbot, but the few sheep that remained in the wilderness chose Alberic for their shepherd. Up to this time they had worn dark tawny habits, probably the same as the Benedictine dress they wore at Molesmes. But now, the Monks of Cisteaux were to be distinguished from the parent Order by a dress of a different colour. The Virgin Mary appeared to Alberic, and ordered him to assume the white dress, which from that time distinguished the Cistercian Order, retaining, however, the dark scapular to show their connection with the Order of St. Benedict. In memory of the descent of the Virgin to Cisteaux, and the miraculous changing of the colour of their dress, a festival was held annually, on the 5th of August, and all Churches of the Order were commanded to be dedicated to the Blessed Virgin. Soon after this, Abbot Alberic obtained a Charter from the Pope, constituting the Monks of Cisteaux into a new Order—the Cistercians. After a short Abbacy, Alberic, worn out with toil and fasting, slept beneath the sod in the Cloister Garth, and Stephen Harding, the Englishman, was chosen Abbot in his place. *Then, says William of Malmesbury: was seen the perfection of Monastic rule. His Monasteries were not as other Monasteries were, flaming with gold, glittering with silver, or sparkling with precious stones, but his Monks are at the present day models for all Monks—a mirror for the diligent, a spur for the idle.*

So great was the conflux of men to Cisteaux, that from thence almost five hundred Abbies of that Order were sprung within the compass of fifty-five years. So that in a general Chapter held there by the Abbots and Bishops that were of that rule, it was ordained, that from thenceforth there should be no more erected of that Order. For their Monasteries were built in deserts and wooded places, by their own proper handywork, unto many whereof they gave special holy names, as—*Domus Dei, Clara Vallis, Curia Dei*, and the like.†

* Tennyson.

† Dugdale.

Some writers consider the first Cistercian house in England to have been Rievaulx, in Yorkshire, which was founded by Walter Espeke, in 1131, but others give the priority to Waverley, in Surrey. Among these is Dugdale, who says that it was founded by William Giffard, Bishop of Winchester, who died four years before the founding of Rievaulx; in proof whereof, *Hearken*, says he, *to what our old Poet, Robert of Gloucester, hath to that purpose* :

Houses of Religion, as I seide ere I wene,
Kinge Henry lobede moche, as hit was well sene.
For the Order of Graue Monkes thowz then men brouzt
Furst here into Englonde, and perabenter men him bisouzt,
As in the Abby of Waverle that it furst become
As in the viii and xx peer of his Kingdome.

Having said this much of their *original*, he (Dugdale) proceeds to describe their rule :

FIRST, FOR THEIR HABITE.—They wear no Leather or Linnen ; nor indeed any fine Wollen Cloth : neither, except it be in a Journey, do they put on any Breeches, and then upon their Return deliver them fair washt. Having two Coats with Cowles, in Winter Time, they are not to augment : but in Summer, if they please, they may lessen them : In which Habite they are to sleep, and after Mattens not return to their Beds.

FOR PRAYERS.—The Hour of Prime they so conclude that before Laudes it may be Day-break, strictly observing their Rule, that not one Jote or Tittle of their Service is omitted. Immediately after Laudes they sing the Prime, and after Prime they go out performing their appointed Hours in Work : What is to be done in the Day they act by Day-light : For none of them except he be sick, is to be absent from his Diurnall Hours or the Compline.

When the Compline is finished, the Steward of the House and he that hath charge of the Guests go forth, but with great care of silence serve them.

FOR DYET.—The Abbot assumes no more liberty to himself than any of his Convent, everywhere being present with them, and taking care of his Flock except at Meat, in regard his table is alwaies with the Strangers and poore People : Nevertheless wheresoever he eats he is Abstemious of Talk, or any Dainty Fare : Nor hath he, or any of them ever above two Dishes of Meat : Neither do they eat of Fat or Flesh except in case of Sickness : And from the Ides of September till Easter, they eat no more than once a day, except on Sundays, *no not on any Festivall*.

Out of the Precincts of their Cloister they go not, but to Work. Neither there or anywhere do they discourse but with the Abbot or Priors.

They unweariedly continue their Canonick Hours, not peicing any Service to another except the Vigils for the Dead. They observe the office of St. Ambrose, so far as they could have perfect knowledge thereof from Millain : And, taking care of sick people and strangers, so devise extraordinary afflictions for their own bodies, to the Intent that their Souls may be advantaged.*

* Dugdale.

K



A Monk of Bordesley in his Working Dress
and in his Choir Habit.

The Cistercian (ordinary) dress was a white gown like a cassock in shape. Over this they wore a dark or black scapular, with a hood of the same colour. The scapular was, with some Orders, a sleeveless tunic, sitting close to the body; with others, a narrow apron merely, and its use was to protect the white garment underneath when the Monk was at work; symbolically it signified, *armour against the Devil*, and hence the origin of the following enigmatical lines, written over the door of the Carmelite Convent at Caen, in honour of St. Simon, an Englishman, third General of the Order, who added the scapular to the white dress of the Carmelites:

D-	DI-	SI-	SCAP-	AC-	AB.AS-
UM.	VUS.	MON.	ULARE.	CEPIT.	TRIS.
T-	SÆ-	DÆ-	UL-	IN-	IN.AN-

The top and bottom lines of which being read in turn with the middle one, give the following couplet:

Dum divus Simon *Scapulare* accepit ab astris;
Tum sævus Dæmon ululare incepit in antris.

Which has been very freely translated thus:

W-	ho-	Si-	first beg-	t-
hen	ly	mon	an his	eaching
T-	wi-	De-	howled to sc-	pr-

Round their waist they wore a black woollen girdle. In the choir they wore a loose white garment called a cowl. When they went abroad they wore a black mantle and hood, and sometimes a cap over the hood. The Lay-brethren wore a black cassock and scapular when at work.

At the dissolution of religious houses there were seventy-five Monasteries and twenty-six Nunneries of this Order in England. Indeed, there was much in the constitution of this Order to recommend it to all classes. The results of their labours were more apparent than those of other Orders; the Benedictine was a scholar, and few saw his works; the costly Churches of the Cluniac excited the murmurs of the poor; the Franciscan was a begging nuisance—the Cistercian was not learned, but he was hardworking. When he first entered upon his lands they were marsh and forest; as he drained the marsh it resounded with the croak of the frog, and the cry of the bittern; and as he cleared the forest, the wild swine and the fox fled before him. The wilderness and the solitary place were glad at his coming. The Cistercian, too, was instructed by his Rule to go forth into the forest, or to establish his house on the barren heath; he was ordered to avoid cities, for in them there was more danger of worldly contamination: wickedness and presumption built the first cities—Enoch and Babylon.

The Cistercians chose remote valleys, and low situations, as symbolical of humility, and herein perchance was one cause of their success. For the religious world has always venerated the recluse, whether dwelling in Carmel, preaching in the wilderness of Judæa, or scattering prophecies from the cavern of Cumæ. But the Christian recluse far exceeded in loneliness of life and severity of discipline all, save the Fakirs of India. The refined Greeks wondered at, and secretly admired, a class of men who far excelled the Stoics in enduring pain, and who set death at defiance. The philosophic Roman marvelled to find in the dreary wilderness of Engaddi a solitary people, who subsisted without money, and who were propagated without women.

In like manner men of all ranks and conditions venerated the solitude and severities of the Cistercians. They beheld in them, a race of men poorly clad, yet denying themselves fires save in time of sickness, ill fed, yet working hard, and only ceasing from labour to pray; spending one quarter of the money earned by toil in the duties of hospitality, and another quarter of it in the relief of the widow and orphan, the aged and the sick.

Learning was not a *sine qua non*, but obedience and diligence were. The Cistercian Monastery was, therefore, the refuge of the serf, who fled from the tyranny of his lord.

His ignorance was not despised, while his industry might earn him the character of a good and faithful servant.

The Cistercian establishment at first consisted of Choir Monks only, performing the duties of alternate labour and prayer; to these were soon added Novices, men who sought admission into the brotherhood and were undergoing their probation; the officers of the Monastery were of course chosen from the former; the latter were as children and servants, receiving instruction and requiting it with service. It was a rule of the Order, that all its members should provide the necessaries of life by the labour of their own hands, but as the Monasteries became rich, which a hardworking Order, in favour with all classes, could not fail to do, it was impossible for the twelve Monks and their Abbot to cultivate all their lands or feed all their flocks, neither were they permitted to hire servants to help them, a third class was therefore added—the Lay-brethren. These did not take the vows but were treated and considered in all other respects as Monks; these too, could hire servants to assist them to cultivate the land and attend to the sheep,



A Lay-brother of the Cistercian Order.

oxen, and horses of the Monastery: the Lay-brethren managed all the secular affairs of the Convent, and this was done under the pretext that the Monks were thereby able to spend more time in contemplation, and the services of the Altar. The Order soon became very wealthy under this system; and their wealth, and the laxities which it always brings in with it, drew upon the Order the reproof of rulers, the murmurs of the people, and the sneer of the satirist. Guyot le Provins said of

them: *The Cistercian Abbots and Cellarers have ready money, eat large fish, and drink good wine.* He insinuated that they were so eager to increase their flocks and herds, that they built pig-sties in churchyards and stabled asses in chapels, and, like the Pharisees of old, devoured widows' houses, and reduced the poor to beggary. When Richard Cœur-de-Lion was starting for the Holy Land, there came to him one Fulk de Neuilly, who besought him before going thither to dismiss his three daughters. *Hypocrite!* said the King, *thou knowest well that I*

have no daughters. My liege, replied the Confessor boldly, you have three: Pride, Avarice, and Luxury. Aha! exclaimed Richard, why, then, the Templars shall have Pride; the Monks of Cisteaux, Avarice; and the Prelates shall have Luxury.

In A.D. 1210, King John summoned all the Religious Orders to meet him in London. William de Pershore attended as Abbot of Bordesley; with a sad heart he must have heard the King, after levying a fine upon all Orders generally, sentence the Cistercians to pay 40,000 lbs. of silver additional. Richard Cœur-de-Lion had previously exacted large sums from them, but that was to equip his army for a holy war. King John had no such plea.

Another proof of the wealth of this Order may be drawn from the records of Bordesley Abbey. Let any one consult Madox's *Formulare*, or the ancient records in the Rolls Court, and he will see how much business was transacted by the Cistercians in general, and by the Monks of Bordesley in particular. It is strange that, while not a vestige of their Abbey is visible above ground in the Abbey Meadows, a greater number of Monastic Deeds were executed by them than perhaps any other Religious House in the realm.

We find there agreements between the Monastery of Bordesley and the Church of St. Mary, of Warwick, respecting the tithes of the Lordship of Bidford; and another between them and the Prior and Convent of Kenilworth, touching the same subject. Agreements between the Monks of Bordesley and the Rector of Hanbury, by which they received tithes of all lands in that parish which belonged to the Grange of Holloway, by paying twenty shillings yearly at Michaelmas; between the Abbot of Bordesley and Richard Fitz-Richard Pauncefot, by which the latter relinquishes his claim to four acres of land held by the Convent of St. Mary of Bordesley, the Abbot thereof making him partaker in all prayers and alms-deeds done there, and giving him, in addition, five marks of silver; between John, Abbot of Bordesley, and Lawrence Benteley, of Beoley; between the Abbot and Convent of Bordesley and Richard Taverner, concerning a shop for mending clothes; deeds concerning advowsons of Churches, villeins and their goods, mills, woods, pasture, rights of common, lands, tenements, right of fishing, free navigation, etc., etc. Amongst these is one, the title of

which shows the Monkish-Latin name of the Red Ditch, from which the old hamlet of Reddyche and the modern township of Redditch derived their names; and, at the same time, shows its connection with Bordesley Abbey:

Quieta Clamantia Agnet' quae fuit uxor Nich : de Vado de Edericheston ad Monachos de Bordeslega Rubeo fossato.

Quit Claim of Agnes, who was the wife of Nicholas de Vado of Edericheston to the Monks of Bordesley on the Red Ditch.

Some of the old parchments are deeds giving to the Monastery lands, woods, etc., for the privilege of the donor being considered a Cistercian Monk, not only during life, but after death. These candidates for the Paradise of Fools, were buried in the dress of the Order; thinking, by that means, to impose upon St. Peter. Some Monks had said, *That all who were in Paradise were Monks*; hence it was thought necessary, by some, to assume, at least, the dress of a Monk, as a kind of passport.

THE PARADISE OF FOOLS.

Here pilgrims roam, that strayed so far to seek
In Golgotha, him dead who lives in Heaven;
And they, who to be sure of Paradise,
Dying, put on the weeds of Dominic;
Or, in Franciscan, think to pass disguised.

* * * * *

And now, St. Peter at Heaven's wicket seems
To wait them with his keys, and now, at foot
Of Heaven's ascent they lift their feet, when lo!
A violent cross wind from either coast
Blows them transverse ten thousand leagues awry
Into the devious air; then might ye see
Cowles, hoods, and habits with their wearers tost
And fluttered into rags, then reliques, beads,
Indulgences, dispences, pardons, bulls,
The sport of winds: all these upwhirled alofe,
Fly o'er the backside of the world far off
Into a Limbo, large and broad, since called
The Paradise of Fools.*

* Milton: *Paradise Lost*.

Some kept the dress to wear during illness, laying it by on the return of health :

So when the Devil was sick, the Devil a Monk would be ;
But when the Devil grew well, the Devil a Monk was he.

Some kept the dress to be put on in the hour of death. Lewis, Landgrave of Hesse, said to his attendants: *As soon as I am dead, put on me the hood of the Cistercian Order ; but take very good care not to put it on me while I am living.* Dante, in the *Inferno*, meets with one Guido da Montefeltro, who describes how he, on his death-bed, put on the cowl of a Franciscan, thinking thereby to escape the punishment due to his vices, and how he really imposed on St. Francis, who, thinking he was a brother of his Order, came to conduct him to Paradise :

When I was dead, for me St. Francis came,
But one of the *black cherubs* thrust him back.

Alluding to this piece of superstition, an old writer says: *How can a man die well in a cowl seeing that no man lives well in one?* and, perhaps, from this custom arose the well known Latin proverb: *Cucullus non facit Monachus*. Robert Roaut de Langley was one who bought this privilege from the Monks of Bordesley.

To give implicit credence to each tale
Of Monkish legends ; reliques to adore ;
To think God honoured by the cowl or veil,
Regardless who or what the emblem wore,
Indeed is mockery, mummery, nothing more :
But, if cold scepticism usurp the place
That superstition held in days of yore,
We may not be in much more hopeful case
Than if we still implored the Virgin Mary's grace.

* Barton.

CHAPTER VII.



THE CALENDAR OF BORDESLEY ABBEY.

1140-1. The Empress Maude issues at Devizes her Charter for the founding of Bordesley Abbey, the first stone of which was laid by Waleran de Beaumont.

WILLIAM 1ST ABBOT.

1148. Abbot William sends a colony of Monks to *propagate* Merevale Abbey. During his Abbacy, Roger, Earl of Warwick, confirmed the Grant of Songar, and gave to the Monks one hide of land in Oxhill, and Peter of Studley, gave them *Haunted Hilborough*.

HAYMO, 2ND ABBOT.

1150. Abbot Haymo sends two Monks to Radmore, to teach the Monks there the Cistercian discipline.

1154. The Monastery at Radmore is transferred to Stoneleigh.

1159. Roger, one of the two Monks from Bordesley, is made Abbot of Stoneleigh.

1165. Haymo is consulted by Waleran de Beaumont, respecting the building of the Abbey of La Valasse.

1166. Waleran de Beaumont dies, and is buried in the Monastery of Pratelles, (Preaux,) *amid the rejoicings of the Angels*. During the Abbacy of Haymo, Hugh Keveliock

gave the Monks of Bordesley the Lordship of Cumbe, or Combe, in the county of Gloucester, that they might sing for the soul of Ranulph his father, Earl of Chester, who died excommunicate; for the soul of Robert, Earl of Gloucester, his grandfather, and for all Christian souls.

WILLIAM, 3RD ABBOT.

Was soon after his appointment, removed to Kingswood Abbey.

RICHARD, 4TH ABBOT.

1188. Succeeds to the Abbacy of Bordesley.

1190. William de Pershore, a Monk of Bordesley, is chosen Abbot of Stoneleigh.

1196. Richard resigns.

WILLIAM DE STANLEY.

Succeeds Richard.

1204. Dies.

WILLIAM DE PERSHORE.

1205. William de Pershore is translated from the Abbacy of Stoneleigh, to that of Bordesley. William de Campden, a Monk of Bordesley, is chosen Abbot of Stoneleigh.

WILLIAM DE CAMPDEN.

1212. Is translated from Stoneleigh, to be Abbot of Bordesley.

PHILIP.

1223. Dies. Another—

PHILIP.

1244. Is mentioned as Abbot of Bordesley.

1261. Peter de Wych dies. He was Cellarer of Bordesley Abbey, and had been raised from that office to be Abbot of Stoneleigh. He built the New Refectory at Stoneleigh, *the only good thing he ever did.*

HENRY.

1265. Is directed by Royal Commission (together with the Prior of Studley), to take an inventory of the lands of Simon de Montfort, William Bagott the Sheriff not being able to *extend* those lands, on account of the resistance of the rebels in Kenilworth Castle.

THOMAS DE ORLESCOTE.

1277. Is translated from the Abbacy of Stoneleigh to that of Bordesley.

1284. Godfrey Giffard, Bishop of Worcester, holds a Procuracion in Bordesley Abbey, and preaches there to all the Guardians of that House.

WILLIAM DE HEYFORD.

1293. Is translated from being Abbot of Stoneleigh (where he was held to be a *man good at business*) to be Abbot of Bordesley.

JOHN DE EDERESTON.

1309. Receives Benediction as Abbot.

1313. The Parsonage of Tardebigge appropriated to the Abbey of Bordesley.

1315. *The Black Dog of Arden* gives the Monks of Bordesley the Advowson of Wickwane in the County of Gloucester and many other gifts. He bequeaths his body to be buried in Bordesley Abbey with little pomp.

WILLIAM DE BERKHAMPSTEAD.

1317. Is mentioned again as Abbot in 1320.

THOMAS.

1328. Entertains King Edward III at Bordesley Abbey, who from this place issues writs for the restoration of the Stone of Destiny to the Scots.

1332. The University of Oxford grants a Testimonial to Robert de Snitterfield, a Monk of Bordesley, Graduate in Theology in that University.

RICHARD.

1349. Is mentioned as Abbot of Bordesley.

WILLIAM DE EDERESTON.

1350. Receives Benediction as Abbot of Bordesley.

1359. Guy de Beauchamp, eldest son of the Earl of Warwick, leaves his Library to the Monks of Bordesley.*

JOHN DE ACTON.

1361. Makes his Profession of obedience to the Bishop of Worcester.

JOHN DE BRADERUGGE.

1383. Makes his Profession and receives Benediction as follows :

Be it remembered, that on the Lord's Day, September 25, 1383, the Right Rev. Father Henry, during the solemnizing of Mass, celebrated by him, bestowed the gift of Benediction upon Brother John Braderugge, a Monk of the Monastery of Bordesley, of the Cistercian Order, chosen to the Abbacy of the same Monastery, and the same Brother John, Abbot, etc., made his profession under the following form :

In nomine Dei, Amen.

I, Brother John Braderugge, now ordained Abbot of the Monks of the Monastery of Bordesley, of the Cistercian Order, in the Diocese of Worcester, do vow the subjection and obedience appointed by the holy fathers,† according to the precepts of the holy canons in this place set forth, to thee, Father in the Lord, Henry D.G., Bishop of Worcester, and to thy successors canonically appointed, and to the Holy Church of Worcester, and that I will, through all things, so show myself ; and this I sign with my own hand.

Which declaration he signed with his own hand.

RICHARD.

1384. Is mentioned as Abbot of Bordesley.

JOHN.

1415. Is mentioned as Abbot of Bordesley.

John Abbe del monastre de Nostre Dame de Bordesley.

* Guy de Beauchamp died at Vendome, in France, and was there interred in a Chapel behind the High Altar, to the east, having a fair monument of alabaster, with his statue thereon, finely cut, and over his harness a surcoat of arms.

INSCRIPTION.

Icy cist Monseigneur Gui de Beauchamp, l'eyne filz de tres-noble, et puissant home Monseigneur Thomas de Beauchamp, Comte de Warwike, Mareschal d' Angleterre, qui trespasa le xxviii jour d' Averill, l' an MCCCLXI.—Dugdale.

† Some professions insert by way of reservation : *Saving the rule of St. Benedict and the privileges granted to my Order.*

1433.

RICHARD FECKENHAM.

1445.

JOHN WYKIN.

* WILLIAM HALFORD.

1452. Receives Benediction from the Bishop of Worcester, at Alvechurch.

1460.

WILLIAM BIDFORD.

1511.

RICHARD.

JOHN SEELEY (Belay or Bylay).

1531. Is admitted into the Brotherhood of the Guild of the Holy Cross, at Stratford-on-Avon; by some he is thought to be identical with—

JOHN DAY.

1534. Who is mentioned as Abbot of Bordesley in this year, and who, in 1539, with 19 Monks, subscribed to the king's supremacy, and to the surrender of their house.

The value of this Monastery, at the time of the Dissolution, amounted in gross revenue to £392. 8s. 6d., net income £388. 9s. 10d $\frac{1}{2}$, per annum, towards which amount Redditch yielded:

	£.	s.	d.
Messuage	0	5	0
Cust' ten'	9	1	7
Ten. ad vol.	0	12	0
Custumar' ten.	17	0	0
Firma de la Gatehouse	0	18	0
	£27	16	7

* William Halford made at the end of his written vow of obedience, *a cross with his own hand*, yet it must not be considered as a proof that he could not write, for the instrument adds: *Nomen Subscripsit.*

The Grange Farm at Hewell was valued at £6. 10s. Out of the revenue, the following pensions were paid to the Monks:

	£.	s.	d.
Thomas Taylor	5	6	8
Richard Yardley	5	6	8
Richard Evance	5	0	0
Roger Shakspeare	5	0	0
Thomas Phillips	5	0	0
John Johnson	5	0	0
William Steward	5	0	0
Richard Boger	6	0	0
John Gonne	4	0	0
Thomas Taylor	4	0	0
William Edwards	4	0	0

As a plea for its dissolution, the inmates of a Monastery were often compelled to sign an instrument, acknowledging themselves guilty of some particular sins, for which they deserved that their house should be taken from them. Some accused themselves of gluttony, some of sins *which are not even so much as named among Christians*. One or two only of these instruments survived the general condemnation of them to the flames, in Queen Mary's time, and are quoted in Bishop Burnet's *History of the Reformation*. Of what sin the Monks of Bordesley accused themselves, we are therefore ignorant. The smaller Monasteries were dissolved under the plea that the rulers of them had not sufficient authority to enforce the due observance of the rules of the Order, and the Monks were to be distributed through the greater Monasteries, *where they would be compelled to live religiously for the reformation of their lives; and where, thanks be to God, religion is well kept and observed* [these are the very words of that Act], *but the possessions of such houses should be converted to better uses, to the pleasure of Almighty God, and to the honour and profit of the realm.**

* Dugdale.

But soon after, in spite of this testimony of the Visitors General in their favour, the dissolution of the greater houses was resolved upon. The Visitors of the smaller Monasteries were Thomas Cromwell, Richard Taylor, Thomas Legh, and W. Petre, Doctors of Law, and a few others, among whom was John London, Dean of Wallingford. This Commission was now greatly increased in numbers; nobles and gentlemen were added to it for the sake of influence, and Richard Devereux, a Friar, for the purpose of persuasion. They excited Monks to accuse their Abbots and each other of the most revolting crimes, they compelled them to produce their Charters and prove their right to land, and, testing some by the strict rule of their Order, and finding them deficient, they expelled them. To some Abbots they promised good pensions, etc. The Abbot of Hailes, *a valyant knight and sowdger under Antichrist's banner*,* and the Abbots of Ramsey and Ely received the money gladly. The Prior of Gisborn assenting, was enrolled in the Commission, and became a decoy duck to entrap others. Courtiers also tried the tongue of persuasion; Lord Audley offered the Abbot of Athelney one hundred marks for his signature, but the Churchman haggled for more. The Abbot of St. Osyth's in Essex, also proved himself a child of this world, and wiser in his generation than the Abbot of Glastonbury, who was hanged for his contumacy. In vain did the Abbots of other houses plead the antiquity of their foundation, or even the burial of the King's ancestors within their walls; in vain did they plead the shelter and hospitality which had been open to all for centuries; some reminded the King that he had eaten and drunk at their table, and in return for this plea one of them, Thornhill, in Yorkshire, obtained the favour of this *Polyphemus*, and was devoured last.

But there was the danger of a re-action to be provided against. Cromwell, who acted as jackal to the royal beast, advised the King to secure the Abbey lands from returning again to those uses for which their pious donors designed them, by dispersing them among the nobility and gentry, by free gift, easy purchase, or advantageous exchange. *This subtle project so wrought with the King that he soon assented to put it in practice, and in order thereunto thought fit, amongst others, to engage Lord Windsor for one.*

* Anthonye Sawnder's Letter to Mr. Secretary Cromwell.

Nor is there anything more characteristic of this most arbitrary of the Tudors than the way in which he compelled Lord Windsor to give up the inheritance of his fathers:

To this end he sent him a message that he would dine with him at Stanwell upon a certain day not long after; and accordingly did so. But before he went away told him that he liked so well of that place as he resolved to have it: yet not without a more beneficial exchange, whereunto the Lord Windsor answering: *That he did hope his Highness was not in earnest: and that it having been the seat of his ancestors for many ages he would not now take it from him.* The King, with a stern countenance, replied: *That it must be;* and commanded him upon his allegiance to go speedily to his Attorney General, and shewed him a draught, ready made, of an exchange for that Lordship of Stanwell, with its appurtenances, lying in the counties of Middlesex, Surrey, Bucks, and Berks, and Southampton (by which the greatness of it may be in some sort discerned) in lieu of Bordesley Abbey in Com. Wigorn, whereof being constrained to accept, he was commanded to quit Stanwell forthwith, though he had then laid in his Christmas provisions for the keeping of his wonted hospitality there. Whereupon he left them in the house, saying: *That they should not find it bare Stanwell.* This happened in the thirty-fourth year of King Henry VIII.—Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*.

There is a general idea that Lord Windsor was constrained to live at Hewell Grange, because the Abbey was destroyed or rendered untenable. There is, however, no proof that the building was seriously injured. It appears to have been quietly surrendered to Thomas Cromwell, whose myrmidons probably stripped the lead from the Minster and Chapter-house, the probability being (judging from the quantity of roofing tiles found) that the other buildings were roofed with tiles. That it was inhabited at some time subsequent to the Dissolution, is pretty evident from the fact that household utensils, etc., too modern in shape to be considered as Monastic, have been found from time to time in the mounds, such as a candlestick, mortar and pestle, Dutch tiles, etc.; while the excavations brought to light a glass bottle, tobacco pipes, and black pottery, beds of charcoal, and quantities of bones, which also bore testimony to either temporary or permanent occupation of the ruins by man. And, indeed, in Dugdale's Map of Warwickshire, Bordesley Abbey is drawn as a large Manor House.

The name of Cromwell too, albeit it was Thomas and not Oliver, has given rise to an idea that the building came to a violent end during the Civil Wars. If there be any truth in this (and the finding of one or two cannon balls in the neighbourhood, or, as some say, in the Abbey Meadows, has given some countenance to the story), it doubtless happened at the time when Beoley Hall was destroyed by Cavaliers, lest

it should shelter the Roundheads, and for the same reason: certain at least it is, that at whatsoever time it was cast to the moles and the bats, it was not laid even with the ground, for a work published about two hundred years ago* describes the ruins as very imposing.

The probable reasons for Lord Windsor's choice of the Grange for a dwelling place rather than the Abbey are given in a preceding chapter. They are, indeed, mere surmises, for the archives of the Windsor family afford no clue whatsoever to the mystery which hangs over the fate of Bordesley Abbey.

What became of the Abbot and Monks of Bordesley after the surrender of their house we know not. The Royal Commissioners broke the seal of the Convent, and then appointed the pensions: the Abbot, John Day, to receive per annum £20, and the nineteen Monks, who followed his example, to receive from £4 to £6 each, but as they had no money to take into the world with them, a trifling sum was allowed to each. They probably lingered in the neighbourhood of their Abbey—as rooks hover round the trees wherein they built, long after they are felled—eating the bitter bread of charity, or, perhaps, vainly soliciting that which they had aforetime so freely accorded to others. Some starved on their ill-paid pensions; others, more spirited, or more restless, went into convents abroad, or became bad subjects at home. Those under twenty-four years of age were absolved from their vows, and went into the world again as laymen; the Lay-brethren, doubtless, did likewise. Some, entering the service of heretics, learned to bow in the house of Rimmon, and rejoiced in secret over the burning of their neighbour, Bishop Latimer. He, indeed, had withstood the destruction of some religious houses, but he had desired to share in the plunder of the demesnes of their house.

Again, the Monks of Bordesley were, without doubt—many of them, perhaps most of them, brought up in the neighbourhood. A fair number of the Abbots were local men, as we may gather from the surnames, *de Pershore*, *de Feckenham*, *de Widsford*, and others. And amongst the scholarly ornaments of the Monastery, we have *Robert de Snitterfield*. The simple Monks would be likely to belong, in a greater degree, to the neighbourhood.

* *British Traveller*.

Whatever plate and jewels the Abbey possessed were immediately seized by the Royal Commissioners for the King himself. All furniture and moveables were sold. The Church was plundered and stripped of its lead, but the Abbot's Lodging and other buildings suffered less, and were left standing (at least such was usually the case, and we do not know that Bordesley was any exception to the rule). The roof of the Minster at Bordesley being of wood was probably sold with the lead, brass, and other materials, and hence the ruin of that part would be more speedy. Then it might well be said :—

The sacred tapers' lights are gone ;
Grey moss has clad the altar stone ;
The Holy Image is o'erthrown—
The bell has ceased to toll.

The long ribbed aisles are burst and shrunk ;
The Holy Shrines to ruin sunk :
Departed is the pious Monk—
God's blessing on his soul.*

* *Rediviva.*



CHAPTER VIII.

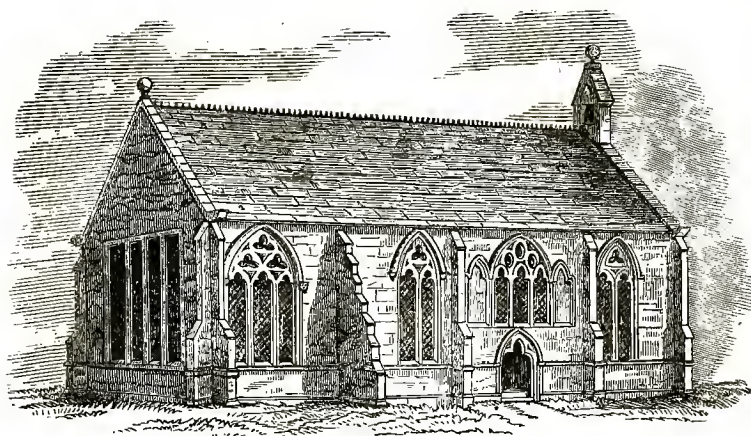
THE CHAPEL OF ST. STEPHEN.

Where yon old trees bend o'er a place of graves.—MICKLE.

ABOUT sixty-one years ago there stood, on the right hand of the road leading from Redditch to the Abbey Meadows, a small building, now locally remembered as the *Old Chapel*, but formerly known as Bordesley Chapel, or the Chapel of St. Stephen. Its north side shewed windows of the decorated period, and its south side, the lancet windows of a preceding style; its east window, for chancel it had none, was of the time of the last of the Stuarts, and to this date may also be ascribed the stone balls which decorated its gables. Its roof was steep-pitched, and crowned with crest-tiles, from the ridges of which arose ornaments, resembling, according to Thomas Lowes—formerly the bell-ringer at the Old Chapel—the *teats of a cow*. It had no west window, but in a bell-gable at the west end was hung the little bell that called the neighbouring population to hear the sermons of Parson Richards, and from its north side ran out a porch, in which, on a wet Sunday, old women left their pattens and their umbrellas, which were at that time becoming common among all classes. Such was the exterior of the Chapel of St. Stephen of Bordesley.

As is always the case with old buildings the soil of the Graveyard had accumulated round the little Chapel, so that you had to descend two or three steps on entering it. That it was an old building there can be little doubt, its walls were thick, its roof too steep in pitch to be one of the time of its restorer, Nathaniel Mugg, and, if we may

trust the drawing of the Chapel given us by Buck, whose *pourtraits* of Abbeys are, however, vile caricatures rather than likenesses, it had some ornamental features in its



The Old Chapel of St. Stephen, Bordesley, A.D. 1805.

architecture that would not be seen in an edifice constructed out of the remains of another, as some suppose the Old Chapel of St. Stephen to have been. Such a building might indeed have ornamental parts built into its walls, but they would not be ar-

ranged in harmony with an obsolete style, as was the case with the Old Chapel.

Then, perhaps, some may say: But of what use would this small Chapel be to the inhabitants of Redditch, seeing that one hundred yards further on there was a building, larger, grander, possessing that antiquity which is revered by all thoughtful men, and where the Services of the Church were performed in a far more imposing manner than would be the case at the little Chapel? The answer is this: The Cistercian Minsters were not intended for congregational purposes. The merchants, and the pedlers who hawked the cutlery of Sheffield or the woollen goods of Norwich, the knights-errant, and the pilgrims, who sojourned in the Abbey, on their way to or from the famous Image of Our Ladye of Worcester, the Shrine of St. Kenelm at Clent, the Holy Blood of Hailes, or the wonderful Wells at Honiley, did indeed attend the services at the Minster, but labouring men engaged about the Abbey, attended service at the Gate-house Chapel. Hither also were conducted those who had just arrived at the Abbey, that they might render thanks for having been permitted so far to accomplish their journey in safety. The Old Chapel of St. Stephen was probably used for this purpose as well as for parochial purposes. Its proximity to the Gate-house renders this extremely probable. Nor is it an isolated case of a Parish Church near to

a Conventual Minster—the Parish Church of Battle stands near the Gate-way of that House which was founded in blood.

Again, its antiquity may be well seen from its being mentioned in the Deed of Gift of Henry VIII to Lord Windsor. The Abbey of Bordesley and the Chapel of St. Stephen are *both* mentioned, which would not be the case if they were one and the same ;* Nash, indeed, says, that the *Capella Santi Stephani* is the same as Bordesley Abbey, an evident mistake, *for all Cistercian Minsters were Dedicated to God and the Virgin Mary*, and this Chapel was Dedicated to St. Stephen. On St. Stephen's Day, too, Redditch Fair has been held for three hundred years at least, as appears by the Constitutions of the Manor of Tardebigge; the present Parish Church of Redditch is dedicated to St. Stephen, to this Saint also was dedicated its immediate predecessor. All these things shew that Redditch is, and has been always, wont to regard St. Stephen as its tutelary Saint, whereas the Abbey is always styled the House or Church of St. Mary of Bordesley.

There was also perhaps another reason for the old Chapel of St. Stephen being dedicated to that Saint. Stephen was a name venerated by the Cistercian Order, for its founder was Stephen Harding, a Monk of Sherborne, and the Chapel dedicated to the proto-martyr, kept his name in remembrance.

The interior of the Chapel was, sixty-one years ago, fitted up like most other Churches of that time. High pews enabled worshippers to sleep secure from observation. At the west end was a gallery for the singers (among whom were at that time the chief inhabitants of the parish), and, perhaps, one or two players on the flute or the fiddle. Under this gallery, on the ground, lay a piece of stone, shaped and hollowed like a mortar. This served as a font in which to baptize the grandfathers of the present inhabitants of Redditch. Under this gallery also lay the effigy of an Abbot of Bordesley, *in pontificalibus*, one dug out of the mounds at the west end of the Minster, when Lord Plymouth was drawing away the stone therefrom to mend the road leading to the Forge. The ceiling of the Chapel was rounded overhead with lath and plaster. The Saints who doubtless were painted on the walls in old time lay buried under coats of whitewash. The texts in honour of

* Also (we give) the right of patronage of the Chapel of St. Stephen in Bordesley.

the *British Solomon*, King James I, had shared the same fate, but the *Lion and the Unicorn* were still rampant on the front of the west gallery. On each side of the east window the Ten Commandments were set up for the edification of the people, and elsewhere the Table of Kindred and Affinity which so much perplexes little boys. Of the monumental tablets, one only has escaped destruction. This is the memorial of the pious Nathaniel Mugg, which was formerly affixed to the north wall of the Old Chapel near the Communion Table, but which is now in the Vestry of the Parish Church of Redditch.

To the Pious Memory
of
Nathaniel Mugg,
Late of Redditch, Gent.,
Whose Earnest Zeal for ye Glory of God
and Promoting of Christian Piety,
in
Contributing to ye Restauration of
and
Settling a Perpetual Benefaction upon
This Chappel,
Has Entitled him to a Better Inscription.
Νῦν ἐν Ἀγίοις
Go and doe Thou Likewise.

<i>Obit. Aug.</i>	}	15
<i>A. Dom.</i>		1712
<i>Aet.</i>		67

After the surrender of the Abbey, an extended parish or district was assigned to the Chapel of St. Stephen, and an account of the Perambulation of its Bounds is still extant :

And now for the bounds and limits belonging to the Parish or Chapel of Bordesley. We cannot find by relation of the oldest men now living that the Perambulation or Procession hath gone any further, by the testimony of JOHN FISHER, Sen., of his own knowledge, and RICHARD LOXLEY, Sen., by the relation of his ancestors, *being either of them of the age of eighty years and upwards*, that it had gone out of the *north door* of the Chapel, and so to a cross or Gospel-place, near to BROWNE's Cottage, and from thence to a Gospel-place, *under a pear-tree, near to a mill erected*—[Redditch Old Mill]—and from thence along the lower part of *Lewenes Hill*, and so through a lane to a Gospel-place without *Lewenes Hill Gate*, called *Sowford Lane*, and so up *Sowford Lane*, that leadeth to *Redditch Common*, to the old Gospel-place *Oak*, that standeth on the Common there, and from thence to a Gospel-place at *Badge Lane End*—[Badger's Lane, now widened and known as Station Road]—*next the town*, near unto KING's Tenement, and so through KING's Entry, and so along KING's Close, that leadeth to the *north side* of *Easemore Wood*, and so along the *wood-side* to a path, that leads down *Picke-fields*, to the *Seven-days'-matb*; and so down the *Picke-fields*, on the right hand, into *Black-Crofts*, along the rails on the right hand that *abutteth* on *Beeley Floodgates*, and from thence, up *Black-Crofts*, to the uppermost end of the *New Paper-Mill Little Meadow Corner*, and so over there into the old *Abbey Orchard*, round about the same, and so out at a *gate at the upper end thereof*, and so *through the Gate-house into the Chapel-yard round about it, Singing of Latines*, and then into the Chapel again, ending the Perambulation.

Nash tells us, that he does not know upon what occasion the above boundaries were set down, but adds that they were signed and dated as follows

HUM. MASCALL,

RICH. MOORE,

July 24th, 1645.

THOS. WASSELL.

The age of the two authorities, John Fisher and Richard Loxley, takes us back at once to the Sixteenth Century. It is probable, therefore, that this Perambulation was not later than the Reformation, for the *Singing of Latines* smacks of the transition from *Rome to Canterbury*.

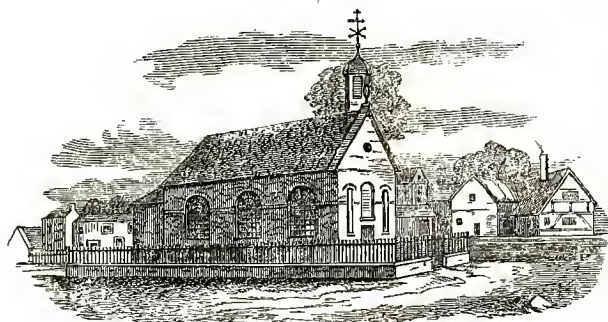
The custom of Beating the Bounds of a Parish is a relic of a still older custom, to wit, when the Priest went out attended by the chief of his flock, bearing a holy banner, to bless the fruits of the earth; but after the land was all divided into parishes, the Priest not being permitted to cross the Boundary of his own Parish, went round it performing the two-fold ceremony of blessing the fields and keeping up the knowledge of the Boundary of his own Parish.

Nash speaks of the Chapel as having lain desecrate for some time—a fold for sheep and shepherds—real, not typical. This was, perhaps, during the time of the Civil Wars and Reign of the Saints, for the Steeple-house was to the Puritan as the Monastery to the Reformer, and to him the Prayer Book was but a little less sinful than the Missal, a compromise between the Lord and Baal. It continued to be used as a shed or barn, until, upon application to the Earl of Plymouth, it was endowed with an estate and benefaction. This was in 1687. The neighbourhood then was *populous*, the roads bad, and the Parish Church (Tardebigge), distant. The Earl of Plymouth set apart for the stipend of the Minster, the rents of Barber's Farm. This the Rev. W. Legard, then Vicar of Tardebigge, was to have, on condition of his performing once every Sunday, either by himself or by his Curate, Divine Service according to the rites of the Church of England.

In the following year the Ghapel was re-opened for Divine Service, and, on this occasion, a Chalice and Paten—the latter bearing the date 1688—were given by Lady Ursula, Dowager Countess of Plymouth.

In 1712, Nathaniel Mugg (whose memorial tablet has been already given), left the rents and profits of certain tenements, &c., in, for, and towards the maintenance and support of a *sober and pious divine* of the Church of England, to officiate at the Chapel of Bordesley, in or near Redditch, reading the Service twice, and preaching once every Sunday, for the instruction of the inhabitants of Redditch. This duty was performed by the Vicar of Tardebigge, or his Curate. In the year after, John Allen, jun., gave and devised to John Field and George Bolton, their heirs and assigns for ever, according to the *custom of the Manor of Tardebigge*, a copyhold estate, requiring of them, the survivor of them, and their heirs, from time to time, and at all times for ever thereafter, a yearly rent charge of £10. towards providing some *serious, sober, and good clergyman*, to reside in, at, or near Redditch or Tardebigge, and read Divine Service and preach a Sermon every Sabbath, or Lord's Day, in the Chapel at Redditch, according to the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England. The same John Allen also left a further annuity of £5. 4s. as a further and better encouragement for the said Preacher and his successors.

But in 1805, an Act of Parliament (which was then necessary before a new Church could be built, and which cost £1,000), was obtained for pulling down the last relic of



The Chapel on the Green, A.D. 1807.

old Redditch, selling the materials, and building a new Chapel on the site of the present Church. So eager were all men to destroy this temple, in order to build up a new one a little nearer to their doors, that a reward of 5s. was given to the man who threw off the first stone. This was one of the balls placed upon the gables by the

piety of Nathaniel Mugg, and the man who undertook to do it, was Thomas Lowes, the bell-ringer of the Chapel, an old man who still creeps among us. He removed the stone ball, but in an evil hour it slipped from his grasp, and crashing through the roof and the floor of the western gallery, dashed to pieces the effigy (before-mentioned) of the Abbot of Bordesley. The work of demolition once begun went on apace, the carved work was broken down with axes and hammers, and thrown into the trenches dug for the foundation of the new Chapel on the Green. The Abbot's effigy probably was broken up, for no one knows what became of it; the roofing tiles found their way into Wapping, where they may still be seen on the roof of a row of cottages there; a few crest tiles still remain on the ridge of the roof, but almost all their ornamental projections have been broken off, owing to their furnishing a tempting mark for the stone-throwers of that district. The hollowed stone used as a font fell into the hands of a man locally known as Dick Turpin, who for a long time used it as a drinking-trough—for fowl. a moment of gratitude for kindness received, he gave it to the son of the landlord of the Plough and Harrow, from whom it came into the hands of Captain Bartleet. The hewn stone of the walls was used for the walls of the new Chapel, and upon the demolition of this, were used a third time in building the present Church of St. Stephen. The fences of the Old Chapel-yard were kept up, as was indeed required by the Act of Parliament for removing the Old Chapel, but the consecrated ground wherein the forefathers of the

hamlet had been buried for perhaps six centuries, was let to a butcher, and the fat bulls of Hereford came up into what had once been the Inheritance of the Lord,

Such was the end of the Chapel of ST. STEPHEN.



CHAPTER IX.

THE EXCAVATIONS ON THE SITE OF BORDESLEY ABBEY.

Ruinosa occulit herba domos.—OVID.

Quidquid sub terra est, in apicem proferet ætas.—HORACE.



SINCE the greater part of the foregoing chapters was written, the labours of the spade have thrown much light upon the Plan and Style of the Minster of Bordesley Abbey. Wishing to ascertain, if possible, the exact date of the building, Captain Bartleet obtained from the Right Hon. Lady Windsor permission to make excavations in the Abbey Meadow, on the site of the Minster, in the hope of finding some inscribed stone, or deposit of coins or parchments, which might clear away all doubt respecting the date of the foundation and the name of the founder. At the same time her Ladyship gave permission to try in other places should the search in that part prove unsuccessful.

The value of this permission was great, for it would prove, beyond doubt, whether the Minster stood at the east end of the Abbey Meadow, as stated by the author of this work, or at the west end of it, as stated by Nash, and by determining the position of this building, would, by inference, determine that of the others, and prove whether their arrangement, as set down in this book, were correct or not. Moreover, it might be expected that the excavations would at least show the general plan of the Minster, if they did not, indeed, throw some light upon its internal arrangement, and the style of architecture in which it was built.

At the same time, too, it would give the present generation an opportunity of seeing what had been hidden from the eyes of man for perhaps two hundred years or more,

besides putting to flight a host of absurd conjectures respecting things hidden beneath the mounds.

For the Abbey Meadow had long been an object of great interest, curiosity, and speculation to all that dwelt in the neighbourhood. Men, now old and grey-headed, had, when boys, attended service in the little Chapel of St. Stephen, and had slumbered peacefully during the exhortations of Parson Richards. They had heard with their ears, and their fathers had declared unto them, that this building was part of the great Abbey of Bordesley, which was destroyed in the old time before them, by the cannon-balls of Oliver Cromwell. Tradition said, by the mouth of one, that it was the *old Catholics' Cooking Kitchen*; by that of another, that it was the Refectory, or the Guest-house; while the *litera scripta* said it was the south aisle of the Minster.* The mounds in the Abbey Meadow were said, by another tradition, to mark the site of *old Redditch*, and over these mounds hung a great mystery. It was believed by some that great treasures were buried beneath them, but for these treasures none dared to dig.

It was remembered, too, that years ago, when a Lord Plymouth was removing stone from these mounds to mend the roads, his delvers came to the graven image of a man with a golden lion at its feet. But, lo! after dazzling the eyes of all for a moment, the gold all flew away, and nothing but a lion of stone could be seen. This marvel put a stop to the further demolition of the little stone-work protected by the mounds, no more removals of stone were suffered to take place, and it was believed by many that if this were done, some evil would befall the House of Windsor. *Deus meliora!*

Yet workmen from the Forge hard by occasionally pulled out from under the turf tiles *with crosses on them*, or pieces of fillet-mouldings from arch or window: others, it was said, had picked up veritable cannon-balls, during the making of drains, etc., some of those balls which, according to tradition, had been fired at the Abbey from Beoley Hill by that Apollyon of old buildings, Oliver Cromwell. Tales of long subterranean passages and great vaults floated in the popular mind, the former running to impossible distances, the latter stored with bottles of wine and barrels of mighty ale; and an old man who, sixty-one years ago, was bell-ringer at the old Chapel of St. Stephen, affirms

* Nash's *History of Worcestershire*.

that through the underground passage between the Abbey Meadow and Beoley Hall the Devil drove a night-coach.*

Nor were these tales, of vaults and passages, altogether without foundation. Boys who came across from the Forge, at the time now called *tea-time*, to play at ball against the walls of St. Stephen's Chapel, knew of deep holes in the Abbey Meadow which they had often tried to plumb by means of a brick attached to a string; and men said they had, whilst cutting drains through it, dug up bottles of good ale, as one of them himself expressed it, *at least five hundred years old*.

In short, to all, these mounds were of great interest—all wished to see them laid open, but none had the least expectation that such a wish would ever be gratified.

On a cold, windy morning in March, 1864, the search for the foundation stone of Bordesley Abbey was begun. The first step was to find the north-east angle of the Chancel, for it would appear, from the account given by the continuer of *Ingulphus' History of Croyland*, of the re-founding of that abbey, which took place about the same time as the first building of Bordesley, that the chief corner-stone was usually laid there.

The Abbot Joffred prayed, and, shedding tears of joy, laid the *corner-stone* of the *eastern front to the north*.

The supposed position of the north-east angle was pointed out from the plan, which had been made twelve months before; the first turf was taken off by Harold S. Bartleet, and in a little time the spade began to throw up fragments of hewn and carven stone, pieces of encaustic tiles, and shivers of painted glass. This last had lost its transparency, and was easily rubbed to powder in the hand, whence many, in spite of the dark red pattern found on some pieces, doubted its being glass at all, until the finding of other pieces of various degrees of transparency, proved that it was so.

After working an hour or two the men came upon the north wall of the Chancel, and following the line of it to the eastward, found in a little time the buttress they were

* This is a form of a superstition which still lingers in the neighbourhood of Mickleton, in Gloucestershire, where all have heard, and perhaps some still believe, that a night-coach, drawn by six headless horses, and driven by a headless demon or sprite, called Spot Loggin, may sometimes be seen going as swift as a whirlwind from the Haunted Hollow, near Mickleton, over Rumer Hill, and through the village of Welford, in the direction of Bordesley Abbey. This is probably the night-coach alluded to in the *Spiritual Quixote*.

in search of. Unfortunately all its hewn stone had been removed, so that there was no hope of finding in that place the stone laid by Waleran de Beaumont, and blessed by Abbot William: indeed, as yet, there had been no stones found which could be identified as parts of the first house of Bordesley, though, in the course of the excavations two fragments of Norman capitals and many pieces of shafting were brought to light, the first of these capitals was an external one, and of the kind, said by a learned doctor, to be a great deal *too often* met with in England; the second was rather richer in design, and from its having been painted was evidently an interior one. All the carved stones, found in the Chancel excavations, belonged to the later times of the Early English style: here, too, was found an heraldic pavement-tile: device—an eagle *displayed* (plate iv, fig. xi).

It was now resolved to try the north-east angle base of the central tower and the buttress at the north-east corner of the north transept. Accordingly the eastern wall of this transept, being found by a transverse cutting, the men followed the line of wall in opposite directions; Morton, a mason, working towards the north to find the angle buttress, and Twinning, a soldier, who had been shot through the body at Alma, working southwards in the direction of the tower base.

In digging for the north-east angle of the north transept, several small tiles, forming part of a tessellated encaustic pavement, were found. These tessellæ were little red quarries, stamped with a single letter in white clay. From the position of the letter it is evident they were laid diamond-wise, the design being completed by means of white semi-tessellæ: the pavement was, without doubt, a monumental one; and, judging from the letters found, it ended as usual with the pious wish: *Requiescat In Pace*. (plate xi, fig. v).



Here, too, was found an old fashioned big-bellied bottle, such as are now rarely seen, except on the swinging signs of old hostleries, or in pictures of two hundred years ago, and close beside it was a black earthenware cup which was got out uninjured, but the bottle, owing to ignorance of its shape, was unfortunately

broken by the point of the pickaxe.* The bottom of the bottle was eagerly examined to see whether any coin had been deposited therein, but nothing was found in it but drainage and mud. Though the bottle and mug were perhaps post-monastic, their discovery served to strengthen the popular belief in the existence of the old Monks' wine cellars, and before evening, since—

Rumour doth double like the voice and echo,†

this discovery was exaggerated into the finding of stores of ale and wine!

The presence of these things, as well as the finding of many fragments of pottery, tobacco-pipes, etc., the fact that doorways and arches were found walled up with pieces of moulding and fragments of pillars, and that walls of the same materials were found in the nave of the Minster, all show that at some period after the dissolution of the Convent, some parts of the Abbey were converted into dwelling-places, whilst others, probably harboured cattle, since in many parts the bones of sheep, oxen, deer, and horses were found, at a considerable distance below the surface. Muscle and oyster shells, too, were found plentifully, but these might have been left by the Monks.

FRERE, *log.*—Give me then of thy gold to make our cloistre,
Quod he, for many a *muscle* and many an *oistre*,
When other men have been full well at ease,
Hath been our *food*, our cloistre for to rese.‡

The north-east angle buttress of the transept when reached was found to be in the same condition as that of the Chancel, of the hewn stone nothing was left but the lowest plinth, and it was, therefore, determined to try the south-east angle of the south transept, where it had already been ascertained that some part of the hewn stone of the wall remained.

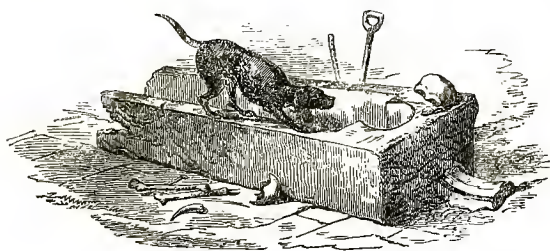
Meanwhile Twinning had come to the junction of the transept wall with that of the Chancel, and here was the first deviation of any moment from the plan. However, though the base of the tower-pier was not found just where it was expected, there was reason to think that it could not be far away, and Twinning was set to work westwardly

† Shakspeare's *Henry IV.*

* Bottles similar in shape, but somewhat smaller, have been found in the Moat at Lichfield.

‡ Chaucer: *Sompnours Tale.*

along the line of the Chancel wall until it were found. Scarcely had he worked two yards before he and Richmond, who was at work in the same part, came to a stone coffin containing human bones. This had evidently been opened before, for the lid was gone, and there were two skulls, and other bones of at least two bodies. Then arose the question, Whose bones could these be? There was no inscription on the coffin, and there was nothing in it which might denote the rank or profession of those who had been buried in it. They were not the bones of simple Monks, for *these* were buried in the Cloister, or the Cemetery. They were, therefore, in all probability the bones of some Abbot, or some Baron, or benefactor; *perhaps* one of the skulls was that of the swarthy and fierce Guy de Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, him whom Piers Gaveston nicknamed the *Black Dog of Arden*, for he bequeathed his body to the Monks of Bordesley,



and was buried there, according to his own command.* He had been a great benefactor to the Monks of Bordesley, and two of them were appointed to sing for the soul of *their special and beloved friend*, and the souls of his ancestors for ever.

Meanwhile, though no inscribed stone had been found in the south transept, a very interesting discovery had been made.

Working inside the south-east corner of the transept, Morton had found an altar step, and part of an encaustic pavement, which seemed to extend some distance under ground. The earth was cleared out, and it was found to be the floor of one of the little Chapels in the east aisle of the transept. This Chapel was in length, from west to east, fourteen feet, and its width about twelve; a massive square pier, of which a portion about seven feet high remained, was at its north-west angle, without doubt one of those piers which marked the division of the Chapels from the body of the transept, while a low wall separated this Chapel from the next one, which was somewhat larger.

With the exception of the loss of a few tiles at the south-east corner, the pavement of this little Chapel was complete, and after it had been well swilled with water, it was

* Dugdale's *History of Warwickshire*.

discovered to be a piece of monastic patchwork, made of tiles of many different patterns, and yet arranged with some reference to design,* as will be seen by referring to the drawing of it, (plate 1). The tiles, for the most part, bore Early English patterns, but there were some near to the altar-step which, from their smaller size, and the amount of wear they had had from the feet of the Monks of Bordesley, and their guests, may have been laid in the days of the first Abbey. Many of them had for their device the ancient symbol of the Fish, a favourite one with the early Christians, because the word 'ΙΧΘΥΣ in the Greek tongue, contains the initial letters of the words—'Ιησοῦς Χριστός, Θεοῦ Υἱός, Σωτήρ,—JESUS CHRIST, SON OF GOD, SAVIOUR.

Again, this fish is enclosed in the *vesica piscis*, a symbol used much by both Saxons and Normans, and representing the belly of the fish which swallowed Jonah, and symbolising *Hades* also, into which the Saviour descended, and whence he rose on the third day, for of this the imprisonment and release of the Prophet was a foreshadowing. The fish also represented the worldly calling of several of the Apostles, amongst others that of St. Andrew, a fisherman, and a favourite saint with the Cistercians, as may be gathered from the ceremony of introduction into the Order. At Glastonbury, a Benedictine Monastery, there was a Chapel to St. Andrew in the south transept.

Next to these tiles were some of apparently the same date, which bore shields charged with various devices, some with three lions *rampant*, some with fleurs-de-lys, and others with the three chevronels of the House of Clare, a family which, in the early days of the Abbey, made affinity with that of its builder, Waleran de Beaumont.

The altar-pavement was, both as to the shape and pattern of its tiles, different from the other, as will be seen by referring to the drawing; and the altar-step† was also of large tiles of great thickness, bent at right angles. Two very large and thick quarries were found in the altar-pavement.

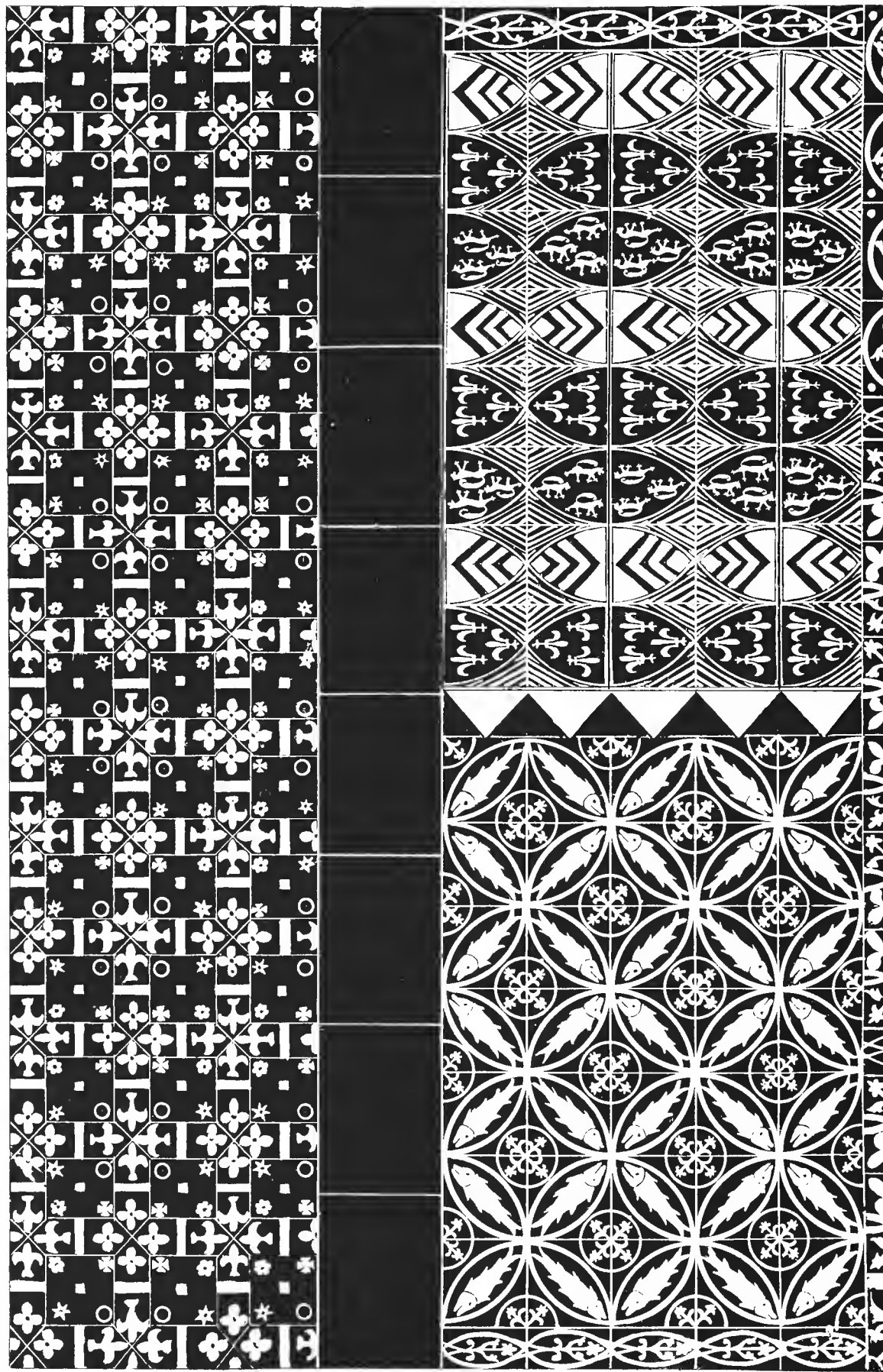
As these tiles were by no means firmly bedded, it was deemed advisable to set a watch over them during the night. For many reasons, natural and supernatural, this was a far from enviable duty, but it was undertaken by the men engaged in the excavations.

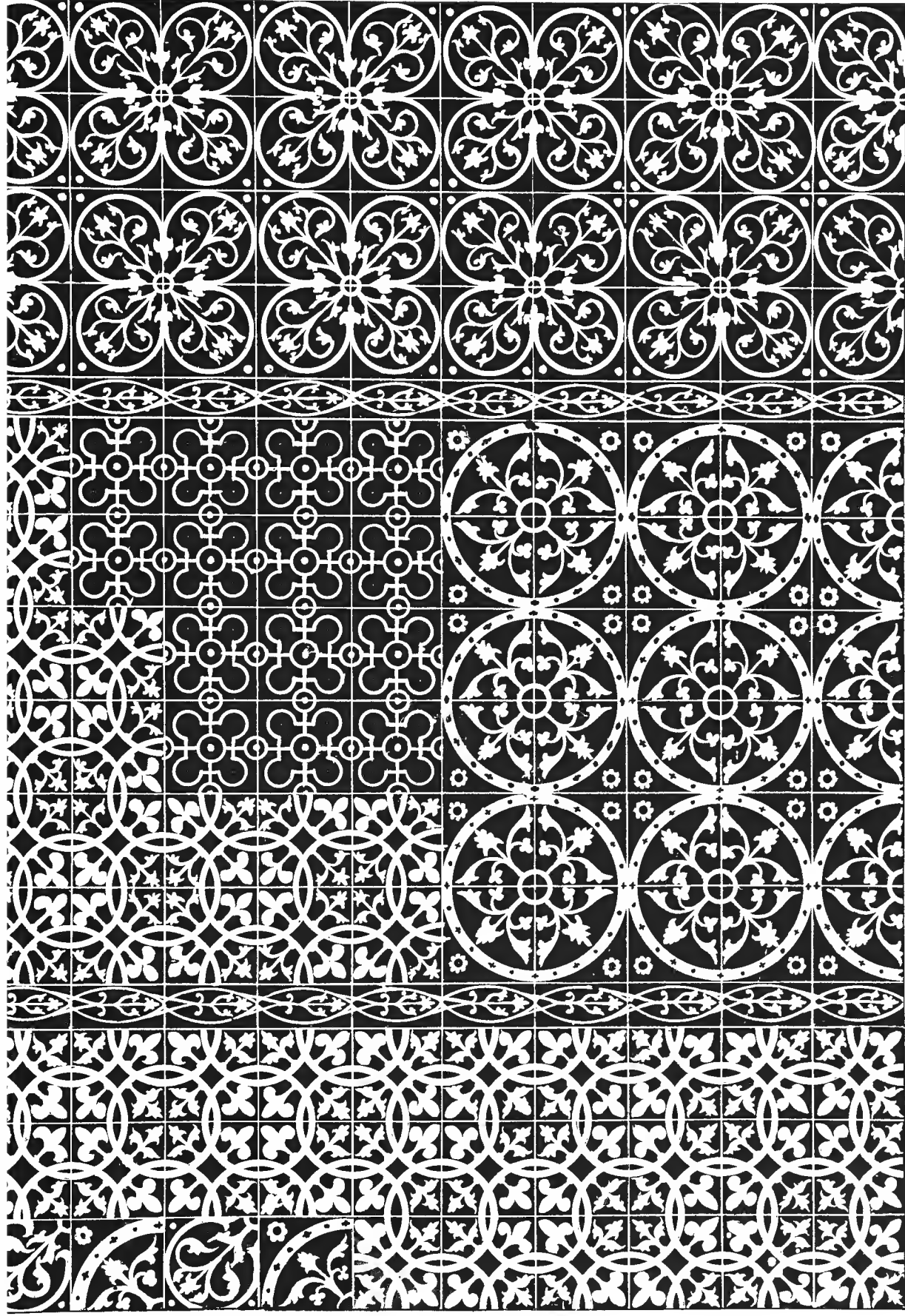
* This pavement was taken up and relaid in the vestry of St. Stephen's Church, Redditch.

† The upper surface of this step, consisting of broad tiles, is shewn in the drawing of the pavement.

Pavement found in the Excavations of Bordesley Abbey 1864.

Altar.





GENERAL PORTION OF THE PAVING OF THE LITTLE CHAPEL IN THE S. E. ANGLE OF THE

One night, however, it befel that no one could conveniently take the second watch of the night, to wit, from nine to midnight, but myself.

It was a dark cloudy night, and the wind blew in gusts across the Abbey Meadow, bending the tall poplars by *The Forge* to and fro, and then dying away mournfully among the pines on Beoley Hill. Though wrapped in many garments it was too cold to remain on the mounds, so retiring to the little Chapel, and sitting down by the base of the square pier, I, like *Sir Hudibras*,

Cheered up myself with ends of verse,
And sayings of Philosophers.

This, however, failed at last to banish graver thoughts, and the story of the *Black Dog of Arden*, the grim Earl of Warwick, whose bones perchance they were that had been so lately disturbed, came again and again to the mind,—his treachery, his vengeance, his murder,* and his burial at Bordesley Abbey. St. Stephen's clock, striking the hour of midnight, intensified rather than disturbed the train of thought, when a louder blast of wind caused me to raise my head—at that instant another head appeared above the heap of soil on the opposite side of the Chapel—it was the head of a large *black dog*. It looked at me for a moment, and then disappeared. I seized a crow-bar, and climbed to the top of the mound, but my visitor was gone.

Unwilling to add to the number of marvellous tales about the Abbey, I said nothing about my sable visitor. But he had already appeared to another, beside myself, *in the dead waist and middle of the night*, viz., to Twinning, who inquired the next morning if I had seen anything extraordinary in the night. Upon pressing him for the reason of his inquiry, he related a story, almost the *fac-simile* of mine, and of the instantaneous appearance and disappearance of what many might have deemed an embodiment of the spirit of the swarthy Earl of Warwick.

* He was supposed by some to have been poisoned.

The Vengeance of the Blacke Dog of Ardenne.

DEDDINGTON CASTLE—MIDNIGHT.

I.

Y^e BLACKE DOG saith to Rise up, rise up, Lord Gavestone,
 LORD GAVESTONE : And buske thee speedilie,
 Here is full many a bold barón
 To bid good morrow to thee.

II.

The *Jewe*, with all his merrie men,
 Earl Pembroke, waiteth here,
 Here is the *Blacke Dog of Ardenne*,
 And the *Hogge of Lancastere*.

III.

Then up arose Lord Gavestone,
 And busked him hastilie ;
 And down the winding staircase stone
 With an heave heart went he,
 And lookéd forth into the night,
 But nothing could he see,
 But in the court he heard a noise
 Of many arméd men,
 And he weened he heard Lord Warwickes voice,
The Blacke Dog of Ardenne.

IV.

Upon a mule they mounted him,
 A guard on either side,
 And whiles the day as yet was dim,
 To Warwick town they ride.

V.

LORD GAVESTONE saith : I pray thee tell thou sullen Knight,
 That rideth here by me,
 What is that lordlie castle hight,
 And what this fair citié ?

VI.

Y^e BLACKE DOG answereth : It is the town of Warwick
That stands so fair to see,
With goodlie gates and loftie towers
And Church of St. Marié.

VII.

And in yon lordlie castle hall,
Abide my merrie men,
And at thy side their lord doth ride,
The Blacke Dog of Ardenne !

VIII.

Quoth LORD GAVESTONE : It grieves me now, Lord Warwick,
That I such words did say,
For well I see that every dogge
Some time shall have his day.

IX.

Quoth Y^e BLACKE DOG : Now stint thy railing foul-mouthed Lord,
And from thy mule alight, -
Soon shalt thou feel, I promise thee,
How the Blacke Dog can bite !

X.

They led him to Lord Warwicks hall,
Where sate full many a peer,
Lord Thomas whom he erst did call,
The Hogge of Lancastere.

XI.

Lord Pembroke, whom he clept the *Jewe*,
And many another one,
Sate there to try him for his life—
This gay Lord Gavestone.

XII.

Then one arose of the mailed band,
And thus his sentence said :
Let him be banished from our land,
But not his blood be shed.

The History of Bordesley Abbey.

XIII.

But a deep voice rang through all the hall,
 And pitillesse did say :
 Small wit, when ye have got the fox,
 To let him loose away !

XIV.

For ye shall have, some other day,
 To catch that fox again ;
 Well knew Sir Piers, who spake those words,
The Blacke Dog of Ardenne !

XV.

They set him on his mule again,
 To Blacklow Hill they ride,
 And ever the *Blacke Dog of Ardenne*
 Rode at Lord Gavestones side.

XVI.

They made him kneel upon the grass,
 In the hollow under the tree ;
 Now say thy prayers, Lord Gavestone,
 Short shrift is granted thee.

XVII.

Lord Warwick took his long sharp sword
 And drew him from the sheath.
 Thy time is come, Lord Gavestone,
 To feel the *Black Dogges* teeth !

XVIII.

Then grimly frowned that black barón,
 And off his head did smite—
Now dost thou know, Lord Gavestone,
How the Blacke Dog can bite !

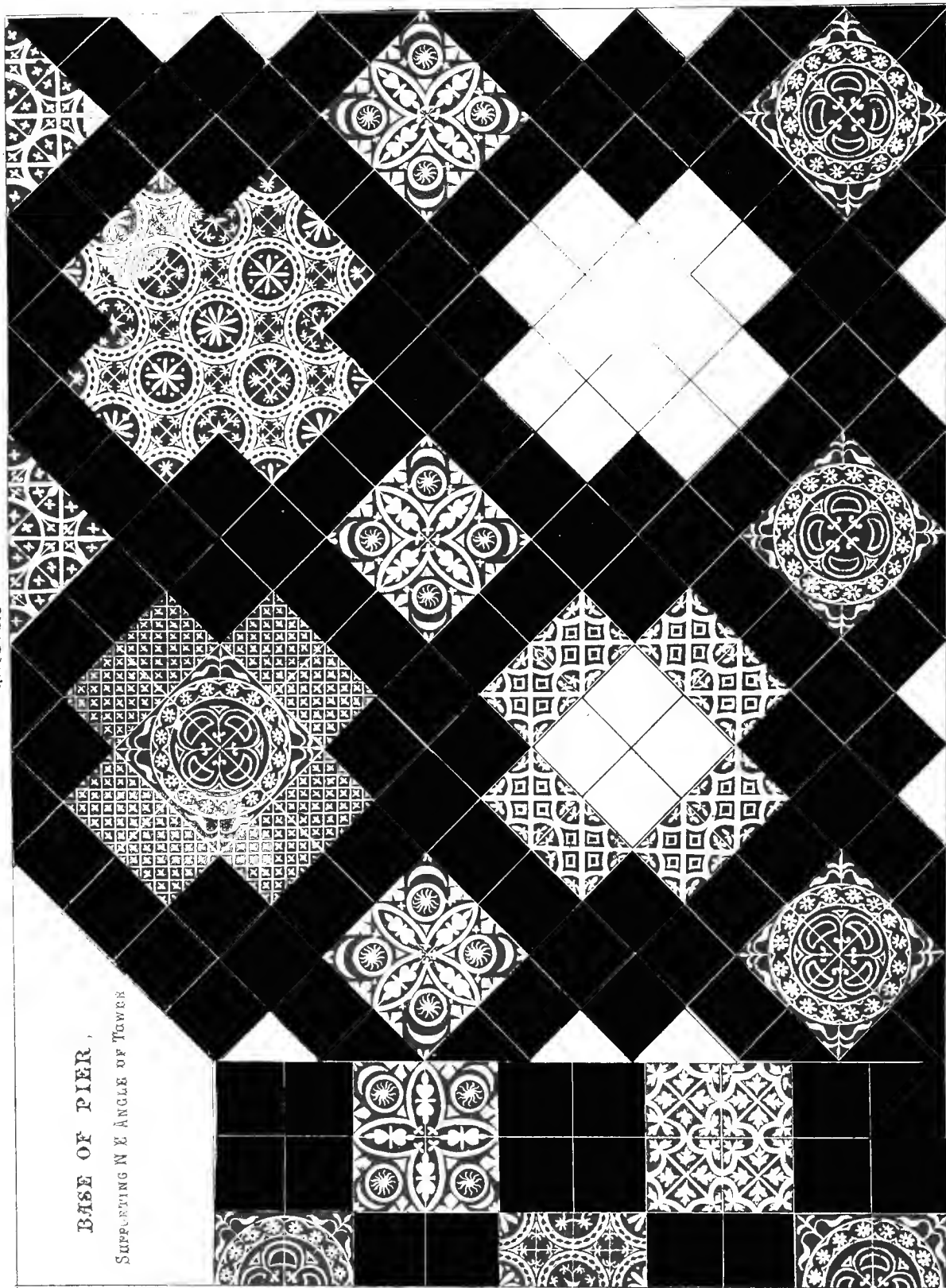
Near to the supposed coffin of the *Black Dog* was found the polygonal base of the north-east angle pier of the Minster tower. Five of its faces remained, and the centre was filled up with concrete of exceeding hardness. The five faces measured respectively

Pavement found in the Excavations of Bordesley Abbey, 1864.

CHOIR

BASE OF PIER,

SUPPORTING N E ANGLE OF TOWER

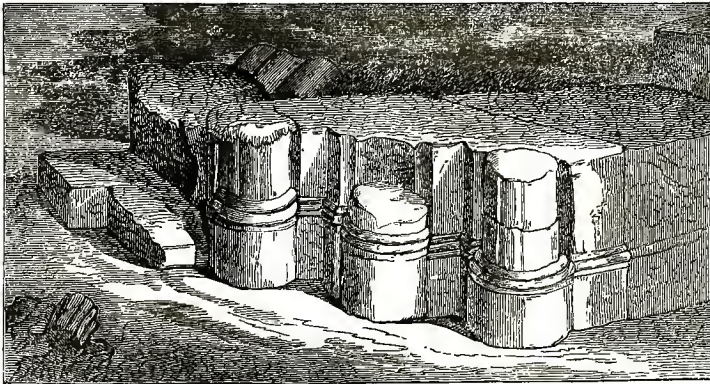


PORTION OF THE PAVEMENT UNDERNEATH THE CENTRAL TOWER OF THE MINSTER OF BORDESLEY ABBEY.

2 feet, 3 feet $8\frac{3}{4}$ inches, 4 feet $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches, 3 feet 9 inches, and 4 feet. Against the face which looked to the north, was a comparatively recent wall built of carved stones from some other part of the Abbey. This extended as far as the first pier of the north transept, and was probably built, after the Abbey had become ruinous, by herdsmen, to render that part habitable either for themselves or their herds. Walls of this kind were found both in the nave and south transept.

The concrete centre of the pier-base was bored, and its faces cleared, but neither cist nor inscription was found. Another pavement, however, was discovered, shewing the design of the Chancel floor: and here, too, were found the two-lion tile, and the first of the grotesque ones. The foundation of the pier-base was found to be of boulders or large pebbles, perhaps from the neighbouring stream.

In order to prove the dimensions of the Minster, it was now resolved to cut through a mound supposed to mark the position of the west front of the Nave; the result shewed that the conjecture was right, for the men soon came upon a wall, and following its course northwardly, found the base of one side of the west doorway. Working along



Remains of the West Doorway of the Minster of Bordesley Abbey.

the inside of the western wall, the base of an attached pillar was found, and at a distance 27 feet eastward of this was found the base of one of the detached pillars, which divided the nave from the south aisle. This gave the distance for another pillar, the foundation of

which was found, though the hewn stone was all gone. Over against this, on the opposite side of the Nave, the base of the corresponding pillar was found, and this determined the width of the Nave, which was found to be 30 feet. This base was peculiar in shape, the bevil being concave. As the distance between these pillar-bases on the south side seems unusually great for a building which, even for a

Cistercian Church was not large, for the Minster of Bordesley Abbey seems not to have exceeded that of Netley in size, it is probable that there were once intervening pillar-bases which disappeared in the days when the ruins were demolished to repair the roads, that holy Abbots' effigies of stone—

Might mend *their* ways, who never mend their own.

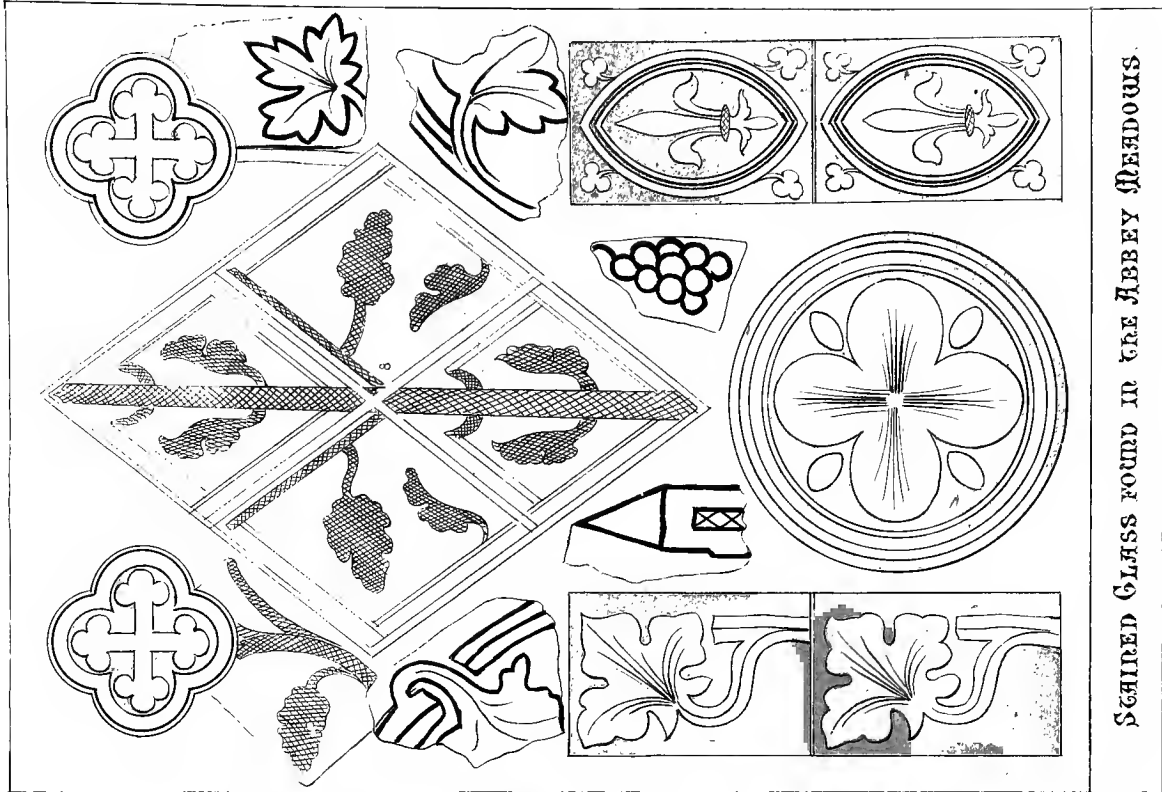
With reference to the size of the Minster, it may be here remarked that the naves of Cistercian Minsters were, as a rule, small, not being intended for parochial use, hence one reason why the Chapel of St. Stephen was without the walls of the Monastery.

Pottery.

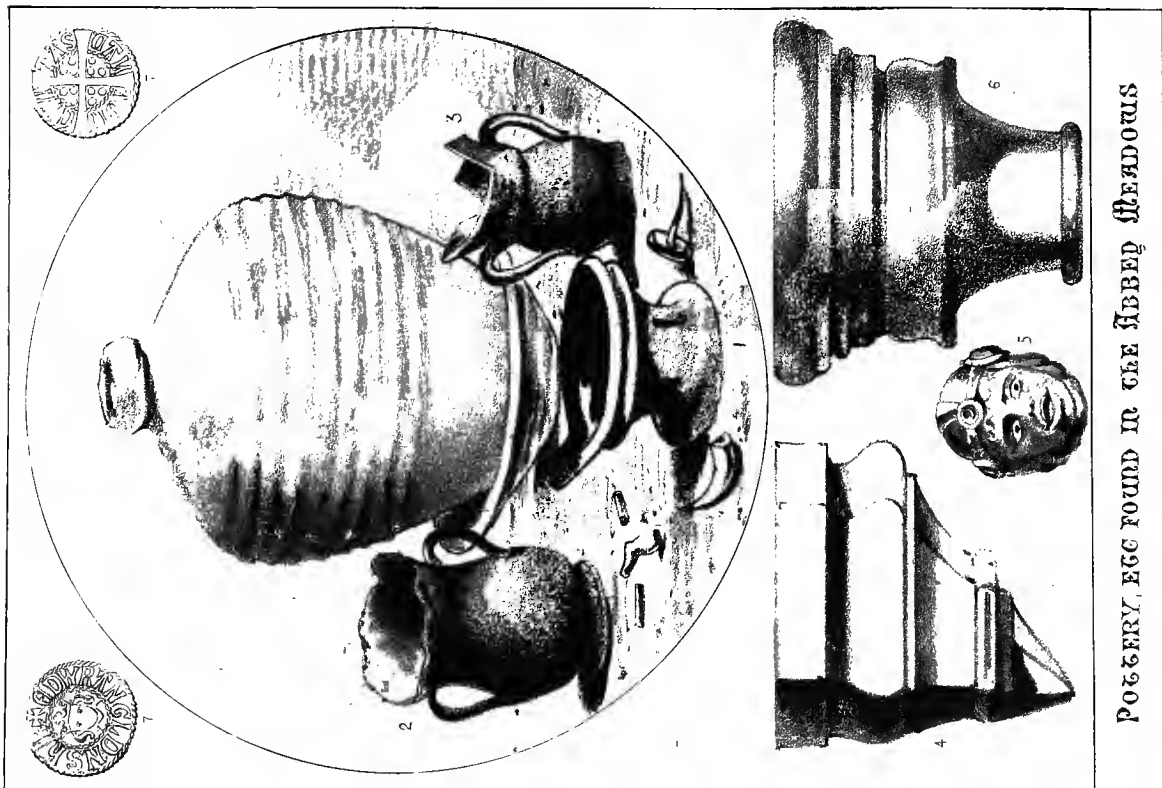
In one of the excavations in the Nave, the bottom of a *pot-à-feu* of coarse earthenware was found. (Plate III, fig. 1.) This vessel, filled with glowing charcoal, was used by the Monks to warm their hands during long winter services, lest, their hands being numbed with cold, they should let fall any sacred thing or holy vessel. Some time ago an entire vessel of this kind was found in the brook running near the site of the Abbey, but being of no value in the eyes of the finder no care was taken of it. Two cups—(figs. 2 & 3)—now in the possession of Captain Bartleet, were also found in the Abbey Meadow some time ago, they are of very rude workmanship, but as that is not always a test of antiquity, it is impossible to say whether they were used by the Monks or by those who came up into their inheritance. Fosbroke says that the Monks had each a mazer, a wooden cup with hoops, called also a *quaigh*, and as it had two handles, it is probable that these cups are imitations in pottery of the old Monastic drinking vessel. Pipes also, with small bowls and thick stems were found, as indeed is still the case on the sites of many Abbeys, and which seem to prove that smoking was practised in the middle ages.

Decorations.

Of the colours used in the decoration of the walls, pillars, and mouldings of Bordesley Abbey, only two have survived their long interment—yellow ochre and



STAINED GLASS FOUND IN THE ABBEY MEADOWS.

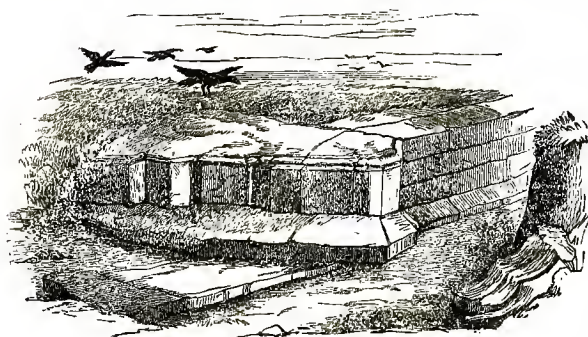


POTTERY, EGG FOUND IN THE ABBEY MEADOWS.

Venetian red—and under these is always found a coat of whitewash. Perhaps in the first Abbey no colours were used, the whole building being whitewashed in accordance with the primitive simplicity of the Cistercian Order. Yet, if no other colours than the above-named were used, the decorations could scarcely have offended even St. Bernard himself, for these generally consist of simple fillets of yellow edged with a narrow line of red. The Monuments without doubt were highly decorated, as a curious little head—(Plate III, fig. 5)—the colours of which, even to the rose tint of the cheeks, remain in excellent preservation, and fragments of tabernacle work, one blue, and one crimson and gold, sufficiently testify: moreover, there are the traditional stories respecting lions and effigies of men overlaid with gold or painted with brilliant colours.

Glass.

The fragments of painted glass found in the Nave were in a better state of preservation than those found elsewhere, either because the glass was of later and better manufacture, or because it had been less affected by the natural acids of the soil; pieces shewing yellow, blue, and ruby stains, and distinct patterns, or fragments of patterns, were found here, whereas the pieces found in the other parts of the building had all lost their transparency, and most of them their patterns. It is probable from the quantity of glass of the pattern shewn on Plate III, fig. 8, being found near the west end of the Nave, that the great west window was chiefly filled with glass of this design; pieces of window lead were also found still enclosing small panes of glass.



Remains of the Chapter-House Doorway.

The excavations were now virtually ended; true it is that afterwards some parts of the Cloister were tried, but rather to prove the correctness of the plan than in the hope of finding records of the foundation of the Abbey. Traces of the Chapter-House were sought for and found in the shape of the base of one side of the doorway, and its freestone step, broken into three

pieces. Another opening near the south-west corner of the south transept disclosed part of the Cloister pavement, divided by the laying of the tiles into three walks, the centre one for the Abbot, and the outer ones for the Brotherhood.

The time allowed for the excavations now drew to a close, and the less pleasing labour of filling up the trenches was begun. A charred oaken post (denoted in the Plan by a white dot), of just the requisite height to shew above the turf when replaced, was let into the centre of the north-east pier-base of the tower. When this had been done, the holes were all filled up, the turf was replaced, and a *Wellingtonia Gigantea* was planted in the centre of the Old Chapel Yard, as a Memorial of the Excavations of 1864.

Though the main object of the search had not been attained, and the popular notion of hidden treasures* had been falsified,—for the only treasures buried there were those of Art and Devotion—yet something had been done. The site, size, and plan of the Minster had been proved. It was found to have been a cruciform building, much like Kirkstall, as to its plan. It had a Chancel destitute of side aisles, square ended, and with buttresses at each angle. Its transepts were large, with eastern aisles only, each aisle divided into three chapels by massive square piers, which at the same time separated the aisle from the main part of the transept. These piers, doubtlessly part of the first Abbey, were *built* of white sandstone, and were as plain as those of about the same date in St Alban's Abbey. The inside of the walls was of the same white stone, but the outside was faced with red sandstone from the quarries of Tardebigge, or Rock-hill, near Bromsgrove.

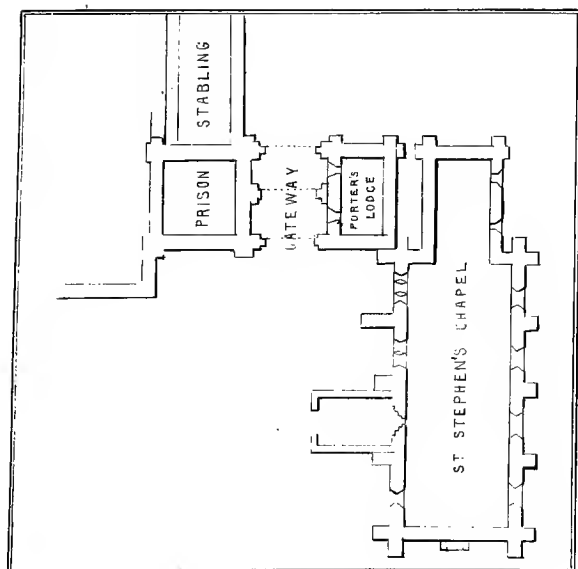
The Nave was somewhat short, as was usual in Cistercian churches, and its western extremity built altogether of red sandstone. Two buttresses of no great strength, for the roof was not vaulted with stone (as the absence of any fragment of groining shews) ran up the western front opposite the line of direction of the pillars. The drain round one of these was still remaining. The west doorway was evidently not intended for the egress of a large congregation, for it did not, in its narrowest part, exceed four feet in width. Above it would be the great west window, filled with stained glass.

* Only one Coin was found, a silver one, of the reign of Edward I, shewn (reduced one-half nearly) on Plate III, fig. 7.

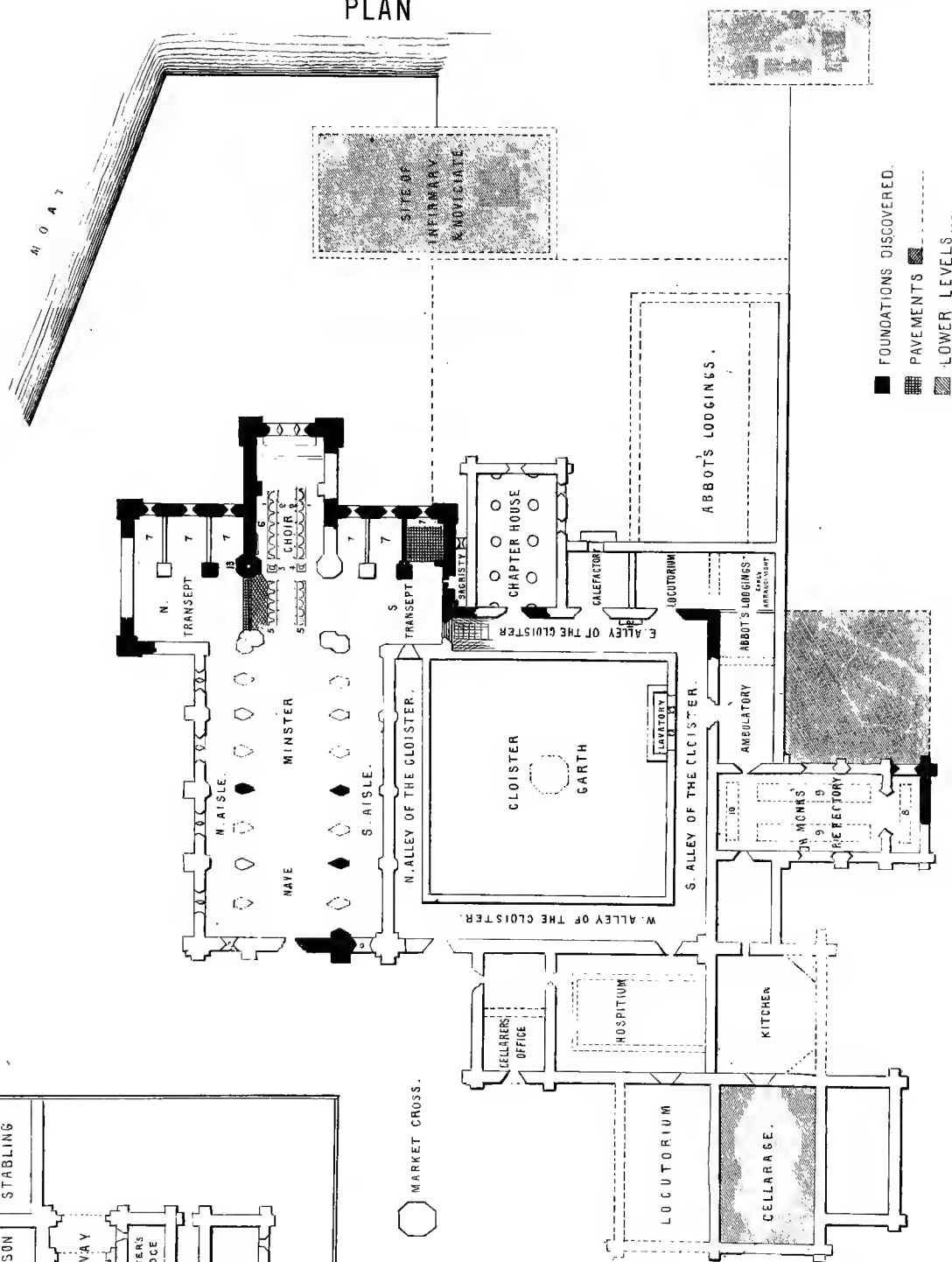
Ground Plan of *Bordesley Abbey*

SCALE 1/80 OF AN INCH TO THE YARD.

ORCHARD



PLAN



REFERENCES:-

- 1 MONKS' STALLS.
- 2 MONKS' SEATS.
- 3 PRIOR'S STALL.
- 4 ABBOT'S STALL.
- 5 STALLS FOR THE INFIRM.
- 6 STONE COFFIN.
- 7 CHAPELS.
- 8 ABBOT'S TABLE.
- 9 MONKS' D.C.
- 10 MONKS' DOOR.
- 11 READERS' PULPIT.
- 12 COFFIN LIO.
- 13 N.E. ANGLE PIER-BASE OF THE CENTRAL TOWER IN WHICH IS NOW PLACED A CHARRED OAK POST TO MARK ITS POSITION IN THE ABBEY MEADOWS.

It has been before remarked that the roof of the building was not of stone, had it been of this material some portion of the groining would have been discovered; the building, too, would have required more massive buttresses to prevent the walls giving way under the lateral pressure of such a roof, but the buttresses at Bordesley Abbey did not project far from the walls, neither were these of unusual thickness. Moreover, the corbels that were found (Plate I, fig. 4) seem to have been intended to support the beams of a wooden roof. This wooden roof was, probably, covered with lead, and this, which the piety of one age intended for its preservation, the rapacity of a later one made the cause of its destruction. Above this roof, and at the intersection of the cross, rose the tower of the Minster.

The excavations also shewed that the floor of the Abbey was laid with encaustic tiles, in great variety; the arrangement of these tiles in the chancel and little Chapel in the south transept is known, and has been re-produced exactly; some of the tiles once formed monumental designs either on the walls or floors; some must have been laid round altars, or in little chantries attached to the Minster, for it is only in this way that the great variety of sizes, shapes, and patterns can be accounted for. The heraldic tiles were memorials of benefactors, some of whom doubtless lay buried in the Minster. Tradition reports the finding of monumental effigies in the olden times. We know now, for certain, that some one, probably a benefactor, was buried on the left as you enter the chancel, but *whose* skull it was that was taken out of the stone coffin, and handed about among the multitude on Good Friday, 1864, we know not; perhaps one of whom, *Lucifer*, if ever he entered the Minster of Bordesley, as he did the village church in the Odenwald, might say—

Underneath this mouldering tomb,
With statue of stone and scutcheon of brass,
Slumbers a great lord of the village,
All his life was riot and pillage :
But at last, to escape the threatened doom,
Of the everlasting penal fire,

He died in the dress of a *beggarly* friar,
And bartered his wealth for a daily mass ;
But all that afterwards came to pass,
And whether he finds it dull or pleasant,
Is kept a secret for the present,
At his own particular desire.—*Longfellow.*



CHAPTER X.

TILES DISCOVERED IN THE EXCAVATIONS.

Thou also, Son of Man, take thee a tile, and lay it before thee, and pourtray upon it the city, even Jerusalem.—*Ezekiel* iv, i.



HE stamping and painting of Bricks and Tiles appear to have been common in the East at a very early period. Inscribed bricks are among the antiquities of Egypt, and painted kiln-burnt bricks, whose surfaces show images of the Chaldæans, are found to this day on the sites of the old cities of Assyria.

In the West, encaustic pavements are usually thought to have been developed by the Normans, in their attempts to imitate the tessellated floors which they found in the old Roman Villas in France, even as those floors had been developed from the first pavements of pebbles of divers colours, such as are still often seen before the doors of those who, from choice or necessity, seek ornament from the humblest materials.

The great variety of patterns, and the wide difference in the excellence of manufacture, tend to show that some of the Tiles found in the Abbey Meadow were made by the Monks of Bordesley, while others were the work of more experienced hands. Some are tasteful in design and well made, others are far inferior, both in design and manufacture. Some show blunders occasioned by the designer not making allowance for the reversing of letters, etc., caused by the stamp used in impressing them. We also find on the Tiles patterns which seem to have arisen rather from a freak of fancy than a spirit of devotion; not that such things are by any means inconsistent with the spirit of Mediæval Christianity, which strangely mingled earnestness

and jesting, devoutness and levity, austerity and licentiousness. Books now considered lewd, were then written and read by men of chaste and exemplary life, and ceremonies which would now be thought indecent or impious were then indulged in by men who would shrink from being thought irreverent. Those who held their breath with awe at the sight of a chalice or a monstrance, and who revered everything pertaining to the priestly office, would at times be found consecrating a boy-bishop, or investing an ass with the symbolic garments of the priesthood, in the presence of the Altar itself. Nay, as if these occasional indecencies were insufficient, obscene figures carved in oak lurked under *misereres* as at Bristol Cathedral, and elsewhere, or graven in stone, stood out impudently from the walls of the Church, as at Tysoe, in Warwickshire.

Designed, perhaps, by ecclesiastics and wrought by the hands of tender and delicate ladies, who would not adventure to set their foot upon the ground for very delicateness, these immodest figures stand forth vulgarly in old tapestries. Painted by artists, who perhaps fasted and prayed to gain more sublime ideas of their subjects, they sprawled naked on the ceilings of Churches in Italy, until they were draped to please the taste of later age. They are found in all branches of mediæval art. The mind's eye sees them in the literature of that age; they meet the physical eye in painting, sculpture, and needlework; they show themselves on the fronts of houses; they thrust themselves into the market-places, and love the uppermost seats in the Synagogue.

Yet these things, so repugnant to our modern sense of propriety, were in those days little heeded or lightly censured, and men and women then would drink water from fountains such as that of the Mannekin at Brussels, with as little disgust as they did in a later age that vomited forth by a Triton, or as they do now that blown from the nostrils of a marble dolphin, or squeezed out of the entrails of a bronze fish or swan; and in a later and more fastidious age than the present, these in their turn may be adduced as instances of the gross tastes and coarse ideas of the 19th century.

Tiles impressed with armorial bearings are commonly found in excavating on the site of any religious house, for they served the two-fold purpose of commemorating the piety of a benefactor, and of adding to the beauty and interest of the Minster. Many armorial tiles were found in the excavations on the site of Bordesley Abbey.

PLATE IV.

Tiles with Armorial Bearings.

I.

THE ARMS OF HENRY II :

Though all the Norman Kings of England, until the accession of Richard Coeur-de-Lion, bore the two lions on their shield, the arms on this tile are doubtless intended for those of Henry II, since we find him, but none of his predecessors, among the benefactors to Bordesley Abbey.

II.

THE ARMS OF THE KINGS OF ENGLAND, FROM RICHARD I TO THE ACCESSION OF
EDWARD III :

These are most likely the arms of Edward I, since they were found near to those of his Queen, Eleanor of Castile and Leon.

III.

THE ARMS OF ELEANOR OF CASTILE :

The Arms of Castile and Leon are a Castle and a Lion, borne quarterly on the shield. The practice of quartering arms began on the Continent earlier than in England.

IV.

THE ARMS OF EDWARD III :

In this reign the practice of quartering arms began in England.

V.

THE ARMS OF RICHARD PLANTAGENET, EARL OF CORNWALL, SON OF KING JOHN.

The History of Bordesley Abbey.

VI.

THE ARMS OF DE CLARE:

Gilbert de Clare married Elizabeth, daughter of Waleran de Beaumont.

VII.

THE ARMS OF DE LACY:*

The Lacies were a powerful family; one of them was a benefactor to the Abbey of Bordesley.

VIII.

THE ARMS OF DE MORTIMER (*mortui-maris*):

IX.

THE ARMS OF BEAUCHAMP, EARL OF WARWICK†. The Black Dog of Arden.

X.

THE ARMS OF DE BIRMINGHAM.

XI.

THE ARMS OF MONTHERMET (?):

XII.

THE ARMS OF DE WARRENNE.

* In Shakspeare's *Henry VI*, Second Part, we find JACK CADE claiming connection with these families by descent or affinity:—

CADE.—My father was a Mortimer.

DICK.—He was an honest man, and a good bricklayer.

CADE.—My mother a Plantagenet.

DICK.—I knew her well, she was a midwife.

CADE.—My wife descended of the Lacies.

DICK.—She was, indeed, a pedlar's daughter, and sold many laces.

† Beoley Castle, burnt in 1303, belonged to the Beauchamps and Mortimers.

Inscribed Tiles.

Some of the Tiles have on them parts of inscriptions, and, without doubt, once formed monumental pavements; one (Plate x, fig. 69) shews the letters A.B.B.A., being part of the word ABBAS, and once helped to mark the burial place of an Abbot of Bordesley. In the north transept were found little square Tiles (Plate xi, fig. 74), each stamped with a single letter of the pious sentence, *Requiescat in Pacè*,—R.E.Q. I. P.E.

Several Tiles were dug up which had at each corner one of the four letters I.N.R.I, the initials of JESUS NAZARENUS REX JUDÆORUM, while in the centre was a cross, (Plate x, fig. 67). Other Tiles were found, bearing letters intended for the sacred monogram *ihc*, but owing to a blunder the letters were reversed in the stamping (Plate x, fig. 68). These Tiles were found in the Chancel.

Grotesque Tiles.

Tiles of a very curious pattern were found in many parts of the building; they were of an oblong form, and their size was six inches long by two inches wide. On them was the figure of a man, naked, save a girdle round his waist, sitting on a stool, and holding up to his eye a flask-shaped bottle (Plate viii, fig. 55). They would seem from their shape to have formed a border to some pavement.

Large tiles (Plate viii, fig. 52) with grotesque head, the eyes squinting, the tongue lolling out of the mouth, were dug up on the site of the Sacristy.

As there has probably nowhere been found a greater variety of encaustic tiles than at Bordesley, it would be tedious and unnecessary to give descriptions and engravings of all which were discovered; the most remarkable are shewn on the following plates in most cases arranged in fours, when four were necessary to complete the pattern: some of the patterns, however, require sixteen tiles to complete them. Several tiles (Plate viii, figs. 50, 51, 52, 53, and Plate x, fig. 66) shew curious arrangements of animals, both birds and beasts, others, curious interlacings of straight and curved lines, etc. In some the patterns are bold and even heavy; in others fine and delicate.

One tile, however, shewing a sprig of oak, with leaves and acorns, may be pointed out (Plate VII, fig. 44) as being the only attempt to break through conventionality of design, and to follow nature; only two or three fragments of these tiles were found, one of which was under the base of one of the pillars in the Nave; it did not, therefore, belong to the latest times of the art.

In some cases, as in the altar pavement of the Chapel, in the south transept, the shape of the tiles contributed to the beauty of the pavement.



Encaustic Tiles found in the Excavations of Bordesley Abbey. 1864.



Henry 2nd.



Edward 1st.



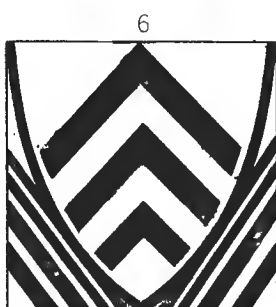
Eleanor of Castile



Edward 3rd.



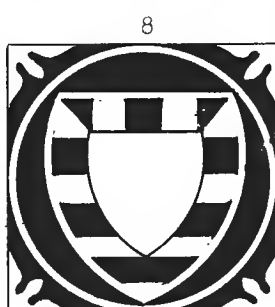
Rich^d Plantagenet
EARL OF CORNWALL



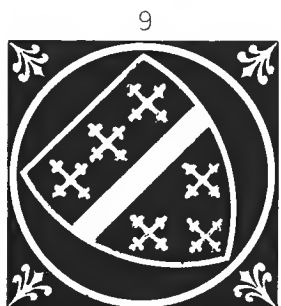
De Clare.



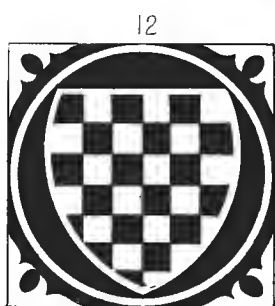
De Lucy.



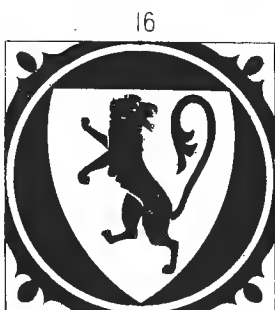
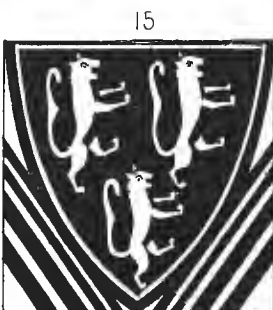
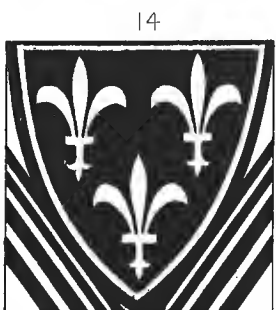
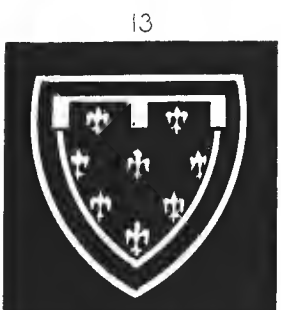
De Mortimer.



Beauchamp
EARL OF WARWICK



De Carrenne.

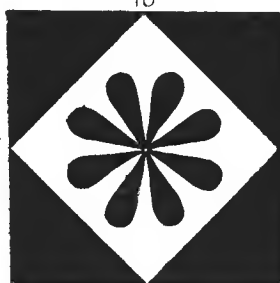


Encaustic Tiles found in the Excavations of Bordesley Abbey 1864.

17



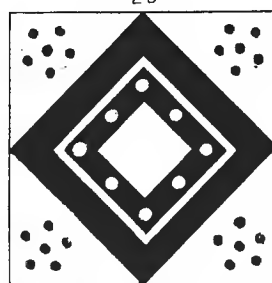
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19



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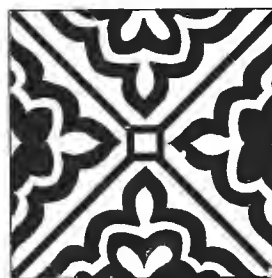
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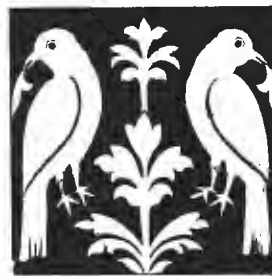
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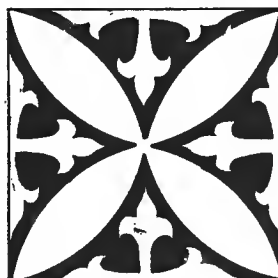
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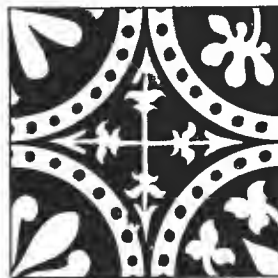
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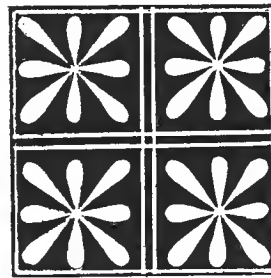
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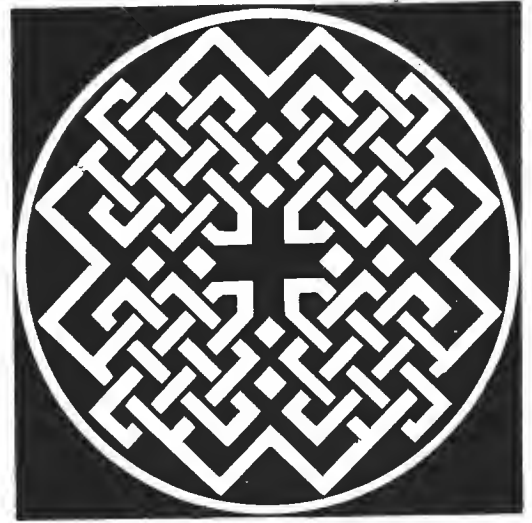
PLATE VI.

Encaustic Tiles found in the Excavations of Bordesley Abbey 1864.

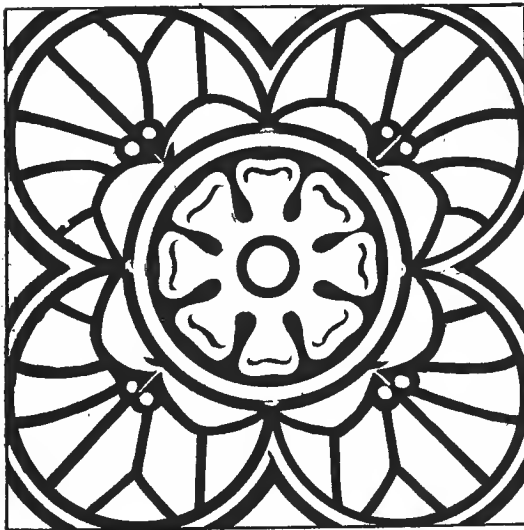
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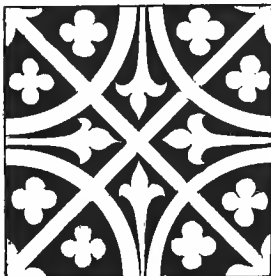
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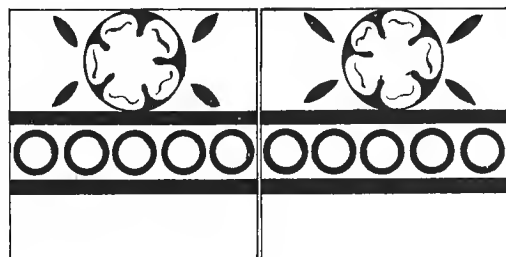
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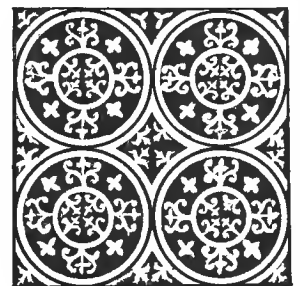


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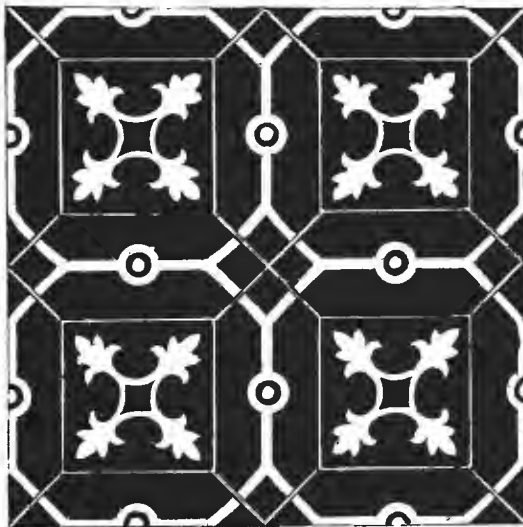
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PLATE VIII

Encaustic Tiles found in the Excavations of Bordesley Abbey 1864.

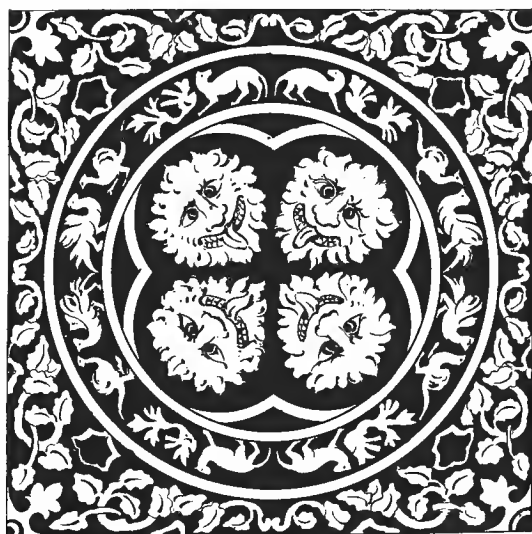
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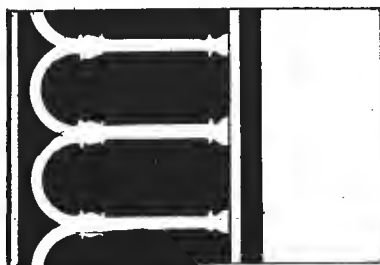
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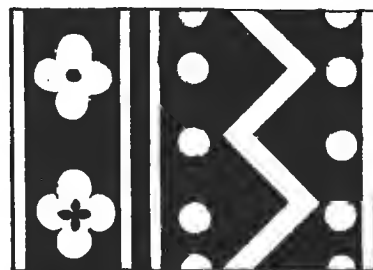
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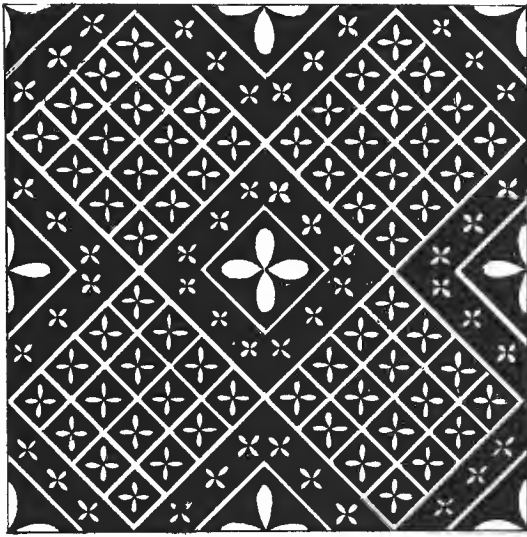


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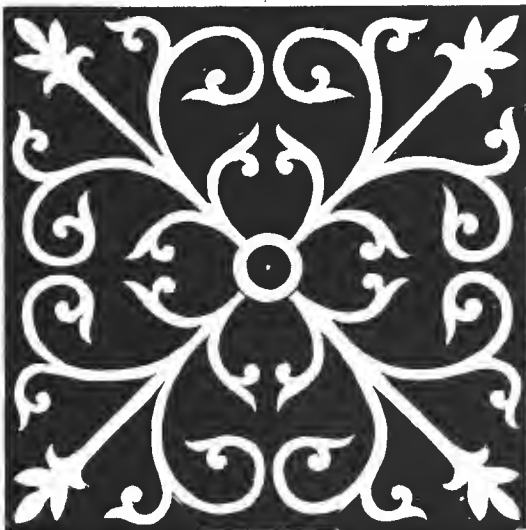
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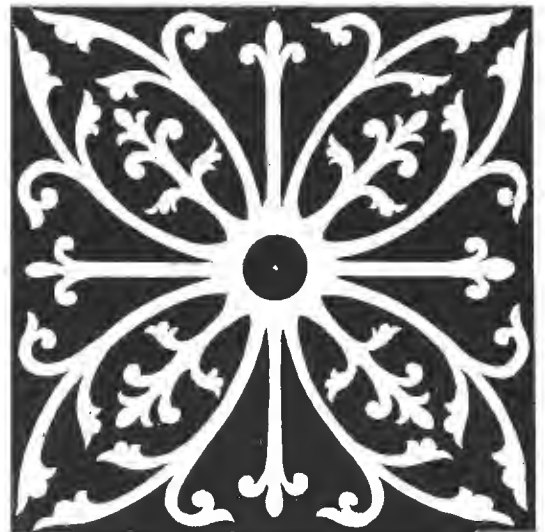
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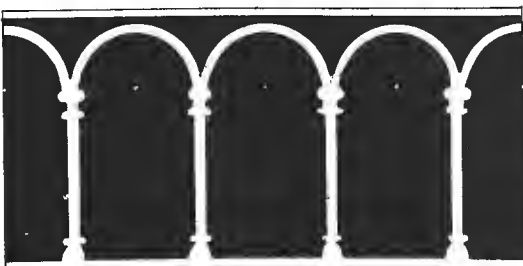
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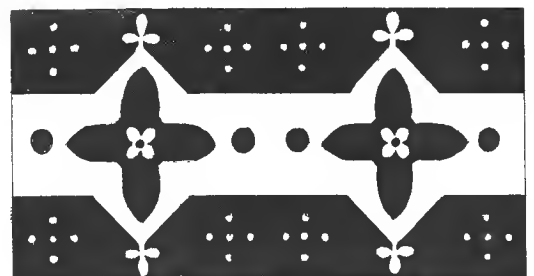
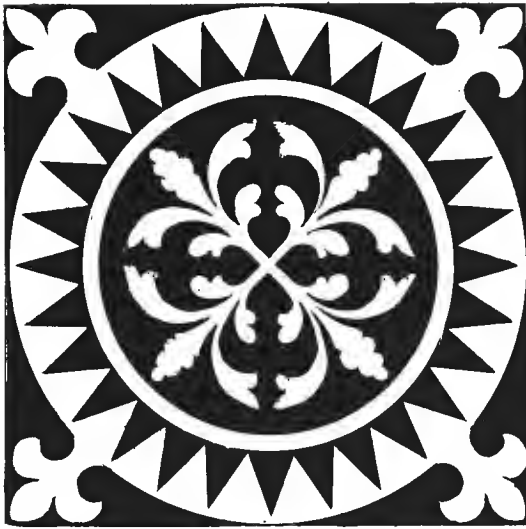


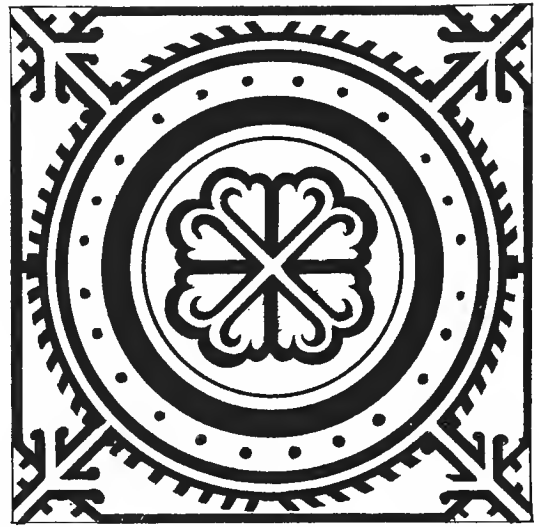
PLATE X.

Encaustic Tiles found in the Excavations of Bordesley Abbey 1864.

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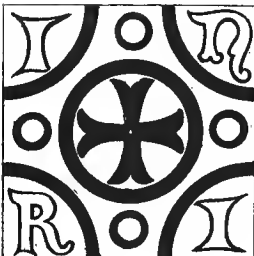
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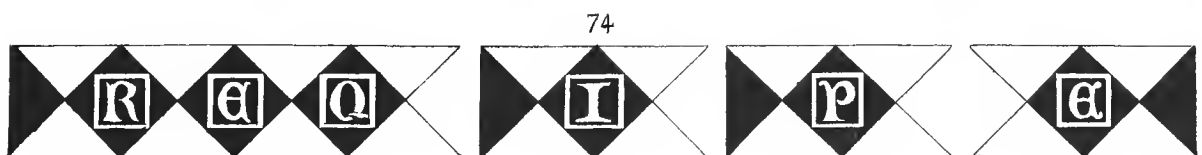
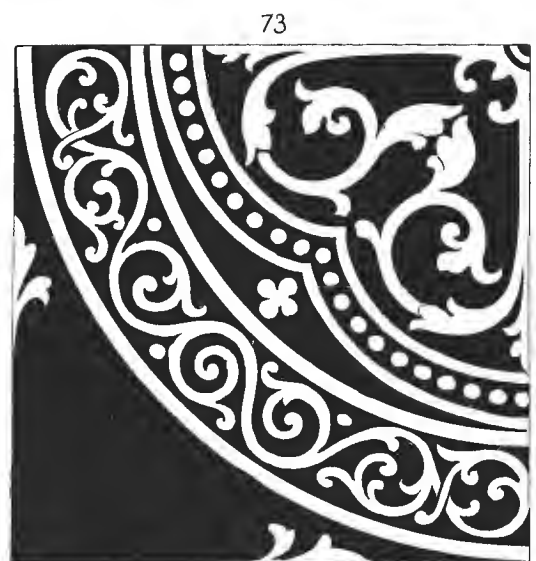
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Encaustic Tiles found in the Excavations of Bordesley Abbey 1864.



CHAPTER XI.

THE VISION OF ROBERT DE SNITTERFIELD, A MONK OF
BORDESLEY.

SOMNIUM AUCTORIS.

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.—SHAKSPERE.

AUCTOR legit.—*Paracelsus followed Servius Honoratus and Cardan, in dividing Man into three parts : body, shadow, and soul. The shadow he calls the astral spirit. At the death of the body the soul goes to heaven, but the astral spirit which is kindred to the firmament, and consists of the two superior elements—fire and air—returns to its grave, the air, and therein decays, as doth the body in the earth, though more slowly, because its elements are purer. The astral spirits of good men do also outlast those of bad men.*

AUCTOR (*defixus cogitatione*).—If then this teaching be true, the Abbey Meadow may be peopled, though we see them not, with a dense and wonderful population, who still linger fondly upon the spot, which they most loved when in the body, and who still obey the thirtieth adjuration of the *Benedicite*, though their bodies have long since fertilized the ground whence they were taken, and have fed the grass that fed the ox that fed the man who died and was buried, and whose body has since nourished other grass, oxen, and men. Doubtless, many of the Monks of Bordesley were good men, and if so, according to Paracelsus, their astral spirit may yet exist as well as their souls. Were one to appear before me at this moment, and, as the bell of St. Stephen's Church is striking the hour of midnight, it draws near the time when such beings are wont to appear unto men, he might give me much information touching the economy of his Convent. Nor would it

be the first time a spirit had appeared to an author. The old Monk who had charge of the Convent Library, has doubtless oftentimes read the Gospel written by the ghosts of Charinus and Lenthius,* the sons of old Simeon, the high priest. Virgil, too, shewed Dante the torments of Hell;† and *Achilles* rose from his tumulus on the Plains of Troy that Homer might be enabled to describe that armour whose splendour blinded the poet.‡

Now, while I thought on these things, there stood before me the form of a man clad in a coarse white woollen garment reaching down to his feet, on which he wore sandals; a hood, drawn over his head, nearly concealed his features, but his bearing was grave and dignified. When we wish for that which we believe cannot come to pass, we may well tremble if we see our wish fulfilled. Pygmalion was startled when the ivory statue grew warm with life.|| The old man who wished for Death to come and ease him from the toils of life, shrank with fear when he saw before him the grisly form whose presence he had just invoked; and Frankenstein shuddered when he saw the hideous being he had laboured so earnestly to give life to, rise and stalk forth into the dreary November night. I had long wished to see a spirit, and one was now before me. There was nothing about it, in appearance, different from the living man. I had seen such figures in many an old town in Germany or France. It was not gigantic; it disclosed not fleshless bones, nor aught that pertained to the grave. The solemn horror which surrounded the phantom arose from the absence of the absurd and extravagant horrors of the imaginary ghosts of romance. It was to all appearance alive, yet I knew that it must have been three centuries since the man it represented, died, and was buried. To presume to speak to such a being was fearful; but to be silent in such a presence was most fearful. I felt that the figure waited for me to speak, and so at last I said: *What art thou?*

PHANTOM. *Pulvis et umbra*, sed quum viverem eram monachus e Conventu S. Mariæ de Bordeslega.

AUCTOR. *Pater reverende, Anglicè loquaris, si possis.*

MONK. English then I will speak, albeit in the days of Robert de Snitterfield,

* Gospel of Nicodemus. † *Divina Comedia*. ‡ *Lecture on Homer*, by Rev. D. N. Walton, M.A.

|| Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.

whose astral spirit I am, it was spoken by few, save peasants, handicraftsmen, and the simple clergy.

AUCTOR. *Robert de Snitterfield! you are then that Monk of Bordesley of whose learning the University of Oxford speaks thus:* To all sons of our Holy Mother, the Church, to whom these presents shall come, the Chancellor of Oxford and the assembly of Masters of the same, with one accord greeting in God everlasting. Forasmuch as according to the word of Truth, a lighted candle is not to be placed under a bushel, but is to be set upon a candlestick, that it may the better light all those who dwell in the house of the Lord: we, therefore, desire that the elegance of manners, the greatness of knowledge, etc., of those that have profited among us, may come the more effectually to the general knowledge of the faithful, etc., and, therefore, we make known unto you, by these presents, that our very dear *socius et confrater* Master Robert de Snitterfield, a Monk of the Church of St. Mary of Bordesley, of the Cistercian Order, having, whilst pursuing the study of the Faculty of Theology, dwelled well, honestly, and peacefully in our said University, being sufficiently proved by scholarly attainments, and solemnly approved by the good assent of all the Masters, has deserved to be exalted to the pre-eminence of Master in the said Faculty, etc., etc.

MONK. I am that Robert of Snitterfield. Four years after the visit of King Edward III to our Abbey at Bordesley, and in the year of his inquisition into the state thereof, received I that honour from the University. Yet the villein who had fallen in the battle of Evesham, knew more of divinity than I did then.

AUCTOR. *Upon what occasion did King Edward come to Bordesley, reverend Father?*

MONK. In the year 1328 came King Edward to our House of Bordesley,* just after his march with Mortimer against the Scots-savages. It was an evil and shameful time in the land then, for Mortimer and his council overruled the young King, and forgave the Scots' King his homage to the English crown, and consented to yield up to him the Stone of Bethel; and the King, who was then the guest of our Abbot, issued a Writ from Bordesley, on the Eve of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin (if I remember aright) to the Abbot and Convent of Westminster, to give up that famous Stone to the Sheriff

* Nash's *History of Worcester*.

of London, to be carried to the Queen Mother, and yielded up to the Scots. Yet the Writ was never enforced, for, after awhile, the King was strong enough to slay Mortimer, and to set the treaty at nought.

AUCTOR. *I have read somewhere, reverend Father, a strange history of that Stone.*

MONK. There was in our Monastery no small stir about this Stone, what time the King was signing the Writ for its being sent back to the Scots. There was a book in our Library which said, that after St. Jacob had slept, laying his head thereon for a pillow, he christened the Stone and called it *Bethel*. Then, after awhile, came by Gathelus, the King's son of Athens, and because he had heard much laud of that Stone took it with him into Gipsy Land. And there King Busiris, surnamed Pharoah, took him for one of his knights; and forasmuch as he served him truly, he gave him his daughter, the Lady Scotas, to be his wife. And because Prince Gathelus bare himself courteously towards the sons of Jacob, the high Saint, who were then serfs and villeins in the Gipsy Land, Duke Moses warned him that he should flee from that land, lest he be smitten with the plagues with which God was about to smite the Gipsies. Then he cut down trees and builded him an argosy, and took with him his wife, the Lady Scotas, and his vassals, and the Stone, and sailed past the Pillars of Hercules, and landed near the city of Ulysses, which is now Lisbon, and there he abode for awhile. But, after a time, he heard of an island which was thought to be west of Portugal, full of barbarians, having no touch of laws or courtesy. Then fitted he out another argosy, and made Heber the Lord Admiral thereof, and, setting sail, landed on the fifth day on an island, which from the name of Heber, was called Hibernia; but the descendants of Prince Gathelus and the Lady Scotas were, after awhile, called Scots. And in this island they found no venomous creature, for Duke Moses had foretold to the Prince that there should be none in the land whereunto he should come, and he had laid a spell upon the Stone, that the sons of Prince Gathelus should reign and be lords paramount in every land to which they brought that Stone. And the Stone was set up in the palace of King Gathelus, on the hill of Tara, and remained there until the days of King Fergus, who took it to Albany, and by virtue of it subdued that land, and called it Scotland; and the Stone was in the King's palace at Scone, until our King Edward I bare it

thence to the Chapel of St. Edward the Confessor, at Westminster, where I trust it will ever abide. But time is short, and on this night only am I suffered to shew thee the Library of our Abbey—come.

* * * * *

We are now, said the Monk, in the east alley of the Cloister. Look through the window, in the moonlight, you will see among the flowers in the Cloister garth the little wooden crosses which mark *our graves*. And yet, continued the Monk, after a pause, though we saw the graves of our Brethren before us, our happiest hours, next to those spent in the Church, were spent here; where we could see, when the sun shone in the heavens, rare and holy plants, whose seeds were brought from far countries by pilgrims, and given to our House for love and thankfulness, growing in the garth or climbing up our walls and buttresses: here, in the summer, we might see fair flowers, whose fragrance rivalled that of incense, and whose beauty or sweetness tempted the butterfly or the bee. Here, daily, after matins, we met to read or to learn. In one part you would see the Cantor, marking out the lessons, or hearing a Brother repeat them in a low voice; or you might see four or five of the Brethren (their cowls thrown back so as to shew that they were not sleeping) diligently studying the Scriptures. Here, too, in a part by themselves, the boys of the Convent School were oft taught by the Master of the Novices; in another place the Novices themselves would be learning the



Carol, with Copyist transcribing.

Psalter.* In the north alley, which runneth there by the Minster, I have sat with my Brethren reading Cicero, or Seneca, or Valerius Maximus, or some other great writer of the olden time, for these authors, being heathens, could only be read in that alley of the Cloister; and there, too, opposite to us, were the Carols, wherein sate the Copyist, carefully re-writing old books; there they wrought silently and diligently, till the bell sounded for service, when, if they were in the middle of a letter, they left it unfinished till that service was over. But

now the bell of the clock in the south transept is sounding one, and in another hour the

* *History of Cistercian Order.*

Sacristan will call the Monks to matins, and, ere that, we must see the Library of the Abbey. So saying, Robert de Snitterfield led the way to the door of the Monks' Dormitory, which, opening to us of its own accord, we entered the sleeping-room of the Monks of Bordesley. Near the door, on his pallet, lay the Sub-prior. At his head hung the keys of the Convent, while above, gently swinging to and fro, was a small lamp suspended by chains from a beam; but it was rather by the moonlight than by the light of this cresset that we saw the monks lying each one on his pallet in his monastic dress, and his only bed-clothes a blanket and coverlet. Their hoods were drawn over the face, so only the lower part of it was to be seen, and the lips of some of them seemed to be moving, as if they were, even in sleep, repeating some part of the Service of the Church.

Yet seven hours sleep in the winter, and six in the summer, was the longest rest they could have, and this was little enough for bodies wearied with study and hard work, and worn out with fasting.

Often when I was yet a novice: said the monk, as if he had guessed my thoughts, was I loth to leave this bed of straw when the bell tolled at two o'clock for matins, but after long years of self-denial it was but the work of a moment to rise and put myself into the presence of my Lord. We had now passed through the doorway at the other end of the Dormitory, and, crossing over the Chapter House, entered a room, which I saw by the moonlight, as it streamed in through a large window on the left, was the Library of Bordesley Abbey. The Monk lit a lamp.

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Some of the books, said Robert de Snitterfield, as thou seest, lie on shelves, some are in these oaken chests, while others are preserved in these almeries with painted doors. Over this row of almeries are the Arms of Guy de Beauchamp, who left, by will, the books which they hold to the Abbey and Convent of Bordesley *for ever. A demorer a tous jours.*

AUCTOR. *Yet Sir Thomas Phillips says that two hundred years after the death of this Guy, they were sold to grocers and tallow chandlers, who wrapped up their wares in them.*

MONK. Such was their fate, maugre their beauty and the precious knowledge which

they contained. Yet some have done much evil in their day. Here is one, said the Monk, opening the door of one of the almeries and pointing to a volume richly bound, which, as I have heard, ruined a fair lady with its licentious lyings. She was the beautiful Francesca da Rimini.

AUCTOR: *That, then, is the book of Lancelot du Lake. I have read of Francisca and her Lover in Dante, and I remember that Geoffrey Chaucer says in the Nonnes Preestes Tale :—*

The story is al so trew I undertake,
As in the boke of Lancelot au Lake,
That women holde in full grete reverence.



Guy de Beauchamp.
From the North Window of St. Mary's, Warwick.

MONK. True, it was ever a favourite with women in spite of its evilness. Often have I had to give them penances for their folly. There is, in the same volume, the *Romance of Aygnes*, but I have never read it. Guy de Beauchamp loved romances much: here is a list of the books which he left in our Convent's keeping before he went to the Wars in France, and bequeathed to our House before he died there. Peace be to his soul!

AUCTOR *legit* :

1. *Un volum q'e est apele Tresor.*
2. *Un volum en le quel est le premier levere de Lancelotee un volum del Romaunce de Aygnes.*
3. *Un Sauter de Romaunce.*
4. *Un volum des Evangelies e de vies des Seins.*
5. *Un volum q'e p'le des IV principals gestes de Charles, e de dooun, e de Meyace, e de Girard de Vienne, e de Emery de Nerbonne.*
6. *Un volum del Romaunce Emmonde de Ageland, e deu Roy Charles dooun de Nantoyle.*

7. *Le Romounce de Gwyoun de Nantoyle.*

8. *E un volum del Romaunce Josep ab Arimathie, e deu Sein Grael.*

MONK. I have read few of these romances, for I was an old man when these books came into our Library, and cared little for idle tales, but this one I indeed loved, for it told how St. Joseph of Arimathie, the gentle knight, came into Britain bringing with him the Holy Grail, which was the chalice used at the Last Supper of our Lord, and how it was lost to men for a long season because of their sins, for no wicked man might find the Sangreal. How at Pentecost, in King Arthur's time, it appeared for a while to the Hundred-and-fifty Knights of the Table Round, who forthwith swore an oath to seek through the world from the Pillars of Hercules to the land of Cathay, until they found where that holy vessel was hidden. But some, because of their sins, were slain by Paynims or noisome beasts, and some fell into the snares of devils and women, and of the Hundred-and-fifty Knights three only saw the Holy Grail again.

AUCTOR:

9. *E un volum q'e p'le coment Adam fust enieste hors de Paradys e le Genesis.*

MONK. This book saith that Adam was cast out of Paradise into the Vale of Hebron, and there dwelt with Eve, his wife, in a cave, and in that vale he wept one hundred years for the death of Abel, his son, whom Cain slew.

AUCTOR:

10. *E un volum en le quel sont contenuz tous les Romances ceo est assaveir :*

Vitas Patrum an comencement, e pus un comte de Auteypt, e la vision St. Pol e pus les vies des XII Seins.

11. *E le Romaunce de Willame Long-espe.*

12. *E Autorites des seins humes.*

13. *E le mirrour de Alma.*

14. *Un volum en le quel sont contenuz La vie S. Piere e S. Pol e des autres livres.*

15. *Un volum q'e est nomme Apocalips.*

16. *Un volum de Phisek e de Surgie.*

17. *Un volum de Romaunce de Gwy, e de la Reygne tout entierement.*

18. *Un volum de Romaunce de Troies.*

19. *Un volum de Romaunce de Amase e de Idoine.*
20. *Un volum de Romaunce de Willame de Orenge e Thibaud de Arabie.*
21. *Un volum de Romaunce de Girard de Vienne.*
22. *Un volum de Romaunce de Brut e del Roy Constantine.*

This romance I have not read, said the Monk; but it is, I doubt not, taken from the *Historia Britannorum* of the devout Monk, Geoffrey of Monmouth, who relates how Brutus, a leader of the Trojans, came, after many adventures, to this island, in the days of Eli, the Archbishop of the Jews, and how it was after him called *Brytain*; and from the *Historia Britannorum* also was made the *Romance of King Constantine*, who conquered Rome.

AUCTOR:

23. *Un volum de enseignement Aristotle enveiez au Roy Alisaundre.*
24. *Un volum de Romaunce d'Arthur e de Mordret.*

This, said the Monk, might be called the Queen of Romances, for it was read wherever the Norman tongue or the *lingua franca* was spoken, and by it the greatness of King Arthur, the beauty of Queen Quinevere, the courtesy of Sir Gawaine, the prowess of Sir Lancelot du Lake, the wisdom of Merlin, and the dolorous end of Sir Balan and Sir Balin, were known in all Christian lands.

AUCTOR:

25. *L'enfances N. Seygneur coment il fust mene en Egypt.*

MONK. This is one of those gospels from which were taken the mysteries or miracle plays, which, in my day, were enacted at Chester, and Coventry, and elsewhere.

AUCTOR:

26. *La vie St. Edw'd.*
27. *Le visioun St. Pol.*
28. *Le Vengeaunce de Nostre Seygneur par Vespasian e Titus.*

That relates, said the Monk, how Titus, because the Lord Jesus was bought and sold of the Jews for thirty pence, did sell them for slaves at thirty for one silver penny.

AUCTOR:

And in the same volume is, La vie S. Nicholas que fust nez en Patras.

R

29. *La vie S. Eutace.*
30. *La vie S. Cudlac.*
31. *Le Passioun Nostre Seygneur.*
32. *Le Meditacioun S. Bernard de N. Dame S. Marie e del passioun sour deuz fiz Jesu Chreist Nostre Seygneur.*
33. *E la vie S. Eufrasie.*
34. *E la vie S. Radegunde.*
35. *E La vie S. Julian,*
36. *Un vol en lequel est apprise de Enfants et lumiere a Lays.*
37. *La vie de Alisaundre ove peintres.*
38. *Un petit rouge livre en lequel sont contenuz mons divers choses.*
39. *Un volum de Romaunces des Marechans e de Ferebras e de Alisaundre.*

MONK. A noble bequest, for which our Convent ever venerated the memory of Guy de Beauchamp, perhaps the more because he died in a strange land, and was buried there, far from his kindred, who were good benefactors to our House; his father, Earl Thomas, ordered in his will that alms should be given with all speed at various religious houses, but especially at Bordesley, Worcester, and Warwick; and his grandfather we called, for his good will to our House, *our special and beloved friend*, and his tomb you may see when we visit the Minster, whither indeed we will go even now, for the horologe in the south transept is on the stroke of two.

We are now, said the Monk, in front of the Choir of the Minster.

It was dark, for the moon was at this time behind a passing cloud, and the light of the Holy Sacrament alone strove with the power of that darkness. This, being immediately before the high altar, was so far off, that I could not see even the form of my ghostly companion, but his voice presently whispered in my ear: That figure, which has just entered the south transept, is the Sacristan.

A white figure, seen by the light of the lamp which it carried, met my eyes. It stole away by the pillars of the transept, bowing to each altar as it passed it, and then up to the high altar, before which it knelt for a few minutes, and then, after trimming the lamp of the Holy Sacrament, stole as silently back into the transept, and disappeared through the door by which we had, a little before, entered.

MONK. He is gone now to trim the Dormitory lamp likewise, but he will return anon.

In a few minutes the white figure again entered the Church, and walking silently up to one of the piers of the tower, untied a cord and began to ring the great bell.

Now every eye is awake, and every hand is making the sign of the cross, in nomine Patris ✠ et Filii ✠ et Spiritus Sancti ✠ said the Monk; and now come with me to the doorway that leadeth into the Minster from the eastern alley of the Cloister. The moon shines again, and thou wilt see the Brethren enter the Church.

Now while he yet spake, one by one the Monks of Bordesley entered the Cloister from the Dormitory, and then I saw the reason of the threefold pattern of the pavement, for the white hooded figures glided silently along by the walls, leaving the middle of the alley walk clear for the Abbot. Their heads were bent slightly down, so that each Monk saw but the feet of the one before him, and their hands were wrapped in the folds of the wide sleeves of their cowls. In this manner they came to the doorway where we stood, which was already opened by the Sub-Sacristan, and then each Monk, as he entered the holy building, threw back his hood and did reverence to each altar as he passed it, and, last, to the high altar.

These which come first, said the Monk, are the Professed Brethren who have not been in our House so long as the Cloister Monks, who follow them, some of whom are Priests having received Holy Orders at the hands of the Bishop. From among these are elected by the Convent, subject to the Abbot's approval, the Obedientiaries or officers of the Monastery, some of whom I will point out to thee as they pass, while others I myself even cannot see, for, as they did not their duty in life, their spirits and bodies are dissolved, and their souls, I fear, are in peril.

That old man who hath even now come in is our Almoner. He it is who directeth the dole, whether it be of money, clothing, or of food; and that he may have wherewithal to give to the poor, he waiteth in the Abbot's Chamber, when he hath guests, to receive whatsoever they may give to the poor. Next to him followeth the Hospitaller, who receiveth the guests and entertaineth them, conducting also those of degree to the Abbot. There, too, on the right is the Cellarer, who is

the steward of the House, and hath charge of all things pertaining to the food of the Convent, and buyeth our corn and beans.

AUCTOR. *I have read that one of the Cellarers of Bordesley became an Abbot of Stoneleigh.*

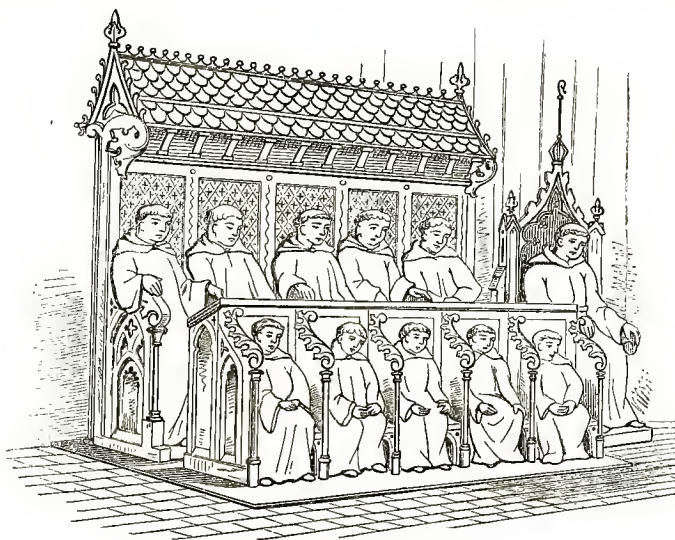
MONK. True; his name was Peter of Wich. He was Cellarer here about one hundred years before my time, and was not much loved by the Monks of Stoneleigh, for they said that the building of a new Refectory was the only good thing he ever did. The Cellarer was fourth in rank among the Brethren, and in the early days of our Order, when the Abbot and Monks had a common Refectory, he gathered the spoons after dinner, taking the Abbot's spoon in his right hand, and collecting the Monks' spoons with his left.

The Infirmarer is not here; this early service he seldom keepeth, for he hath to wait on the sick in the Infirmary, and he hath with him to help him two brothers, one of whom is a right skilful leech. This next Monk is the Precentor, who teacheth music to the Monks and Novices, and who directeth the musical services of the Church, for which purpose he carrieth a baton. He will take his seat in the middle stall on the right hand of the Choir, and on his side will the chant begin: he is also the Librarian, and hath charge of our Abbey Seal. He ranketh next after the Sub-Prior, whose office it is to say grace at dinner and supper, to lock fast the doors of the Convent, from five o'clock in the evening until five in the morning. That Monk, whom thou sawest sleeping next the Dormitory door, is the Sub-Prior, and he sleepeth there, that none may wander out of his cell at night.

The Prior, like the Abbot (for the old rule is broken) hath an apartment of his own; he manageth the affairs of the Convent in the absence of the Abbot, and useth all his powers, save the deposing of Obedientiaries; that is he who walketh on the right of the Sub-Prior. None of these have any distinction of dress, not even Abbot Thomas, whom thou seest last in the procession.

Meanwhile, by another door, the Novices had entered and taken their seats in front of the Monks' stalls. The bell now ceased ringing, the Sacristan placed a candle on the lectern whence the lessons were to be read, and, save the lamp of the Holy Sacrament,

there was no other light in the Minster, for the Monks of Bordesley knew the service by heart. The Monks now took their places in the stalls, Abbot Thomas sitting in the



A Semi-choir of Cistercian Monks and Novices.

first seat on the south side, turning somewhat to the east, so that his eye easily glanced along the rows of Monks and Novices. Opposite him, on the north side, near a tomb, sate the Prior. All knelt down; their hands clasped; their feet close together.

MONK. They are now going to say the *Paternoster*, the *Ave-Maria*, and the *Credo*. My stall must not be empty. Vale. Vale. Vale.

Cætera quæ illa nocte evenerunt memoriæ desunt.

It will not be : it may not last :
The vision of enchantment 's past,
Like frostwork, in the morning's ray,
The fancied fabric melts away :
Each Gothic arch, memorial stone,
And long dim lofty aisle is gone :—
And lingering long, deception dear,
The Quire's high sounds die on my ear.—*Sir W. Scott.*

Birmingham: Printed by Corns and Bartlett, High Street and Union Street.

